竹光侍

His sword must be bamboo!

たけみつざむらい

六

松本大洋
【作】永福一成

BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL

竹光侍
His sword must be bamboo!
たけみつざむらい
六
松本大洋
【作】永福一成

小学館
BCS2476

9784091821904

ISBN978-4-09-182476-9

C9979 ¥857E

定価：本体857円＋税

雑誌 45774-76　小学館

竹光侍

His sword must be bamboo!

たけみつさむらい

六

TAKEMITSU ZAMURAI

ART BY
MATSUMOTO
TAIYOU
STORY BY
EIFUKU ISSEI

BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL

BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL

竹光侍

His sword must be bamboo!

たけみつさむらい

六

松本大洋
【作】永福一成

小学館

竹光侍

His sword must be bamboo!

たけみつざむらい

六

【作】松本大洋
永福一成
【考証】保垣孝幸

BIG SPIRITS COMICS SPECIAL

目次

【第五十一話】冬ノハジマリ ―― 二
【第五十二話】真っ赤な夕陽に忠犬吠える！ ―― 一五
【第五十三話】あかめ ―― 四三
【第五十四話】月夜の蟹 ―― 六一
【第五十五話】千騎の馬の音が聞こえる ―― 七九
【第五十六話】夜明け前 ―― 一〇一
【第五十七話】櫛と刀 ―― 一一九
【第五十八話】雪の下の鯉 ―― 一三七
【第五十九話】椋鳥たち ―― 一五五
【第六十話】江戸の雪 ―― 一七三

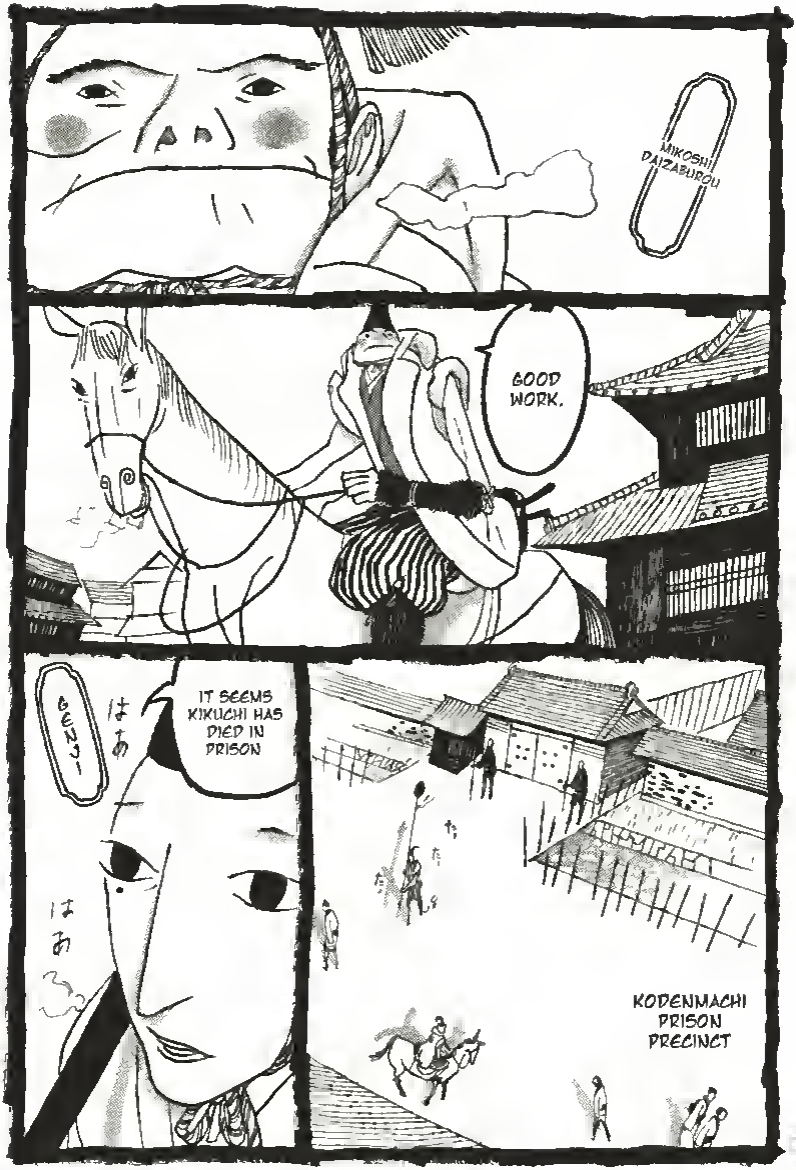
CHAPTER 51
WINTER'S BEGINNING

ON A CERTAIN DECEMBER NIGHT, KIKUCHI'S UNRELENTING THIRST FOR REVENGE FINDS ONE OF THOSE FROM SHINANO THAT REPORTED HIM TO THE MAGISTRATE...
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
STEP...
UGH.

I REMEMBER ALL YOUR MEN'S FACES.
AN ASSASSIN IS ONE WHO NEVER FORGETS A FACE.
HUFF
HUFF
SCARED, AREN'T YOU...?
SHEATHE...
KIN-ZASHI

ANY LAST WORDS?
JUST KILL ME.
CLANG
CHOP

CHAPTER 51
WINTER'S
BEGINNING


MIKOSHI DAIZABUROU
GOOD WORK.
KODENMACHI PRISON PRECINCT
IT SEEMS KIKUCHI HAS DIED IN PRISON
GENJI-
はあ
はあ

THE GUARDS SAY IT WAS DUE TO TUBER-CULOSIS...
YES, APPARENTLY AROUND A MONTH AGO.
DIED IN PRISON?
TROT
TROT
HMPH
AS IF!
TROT

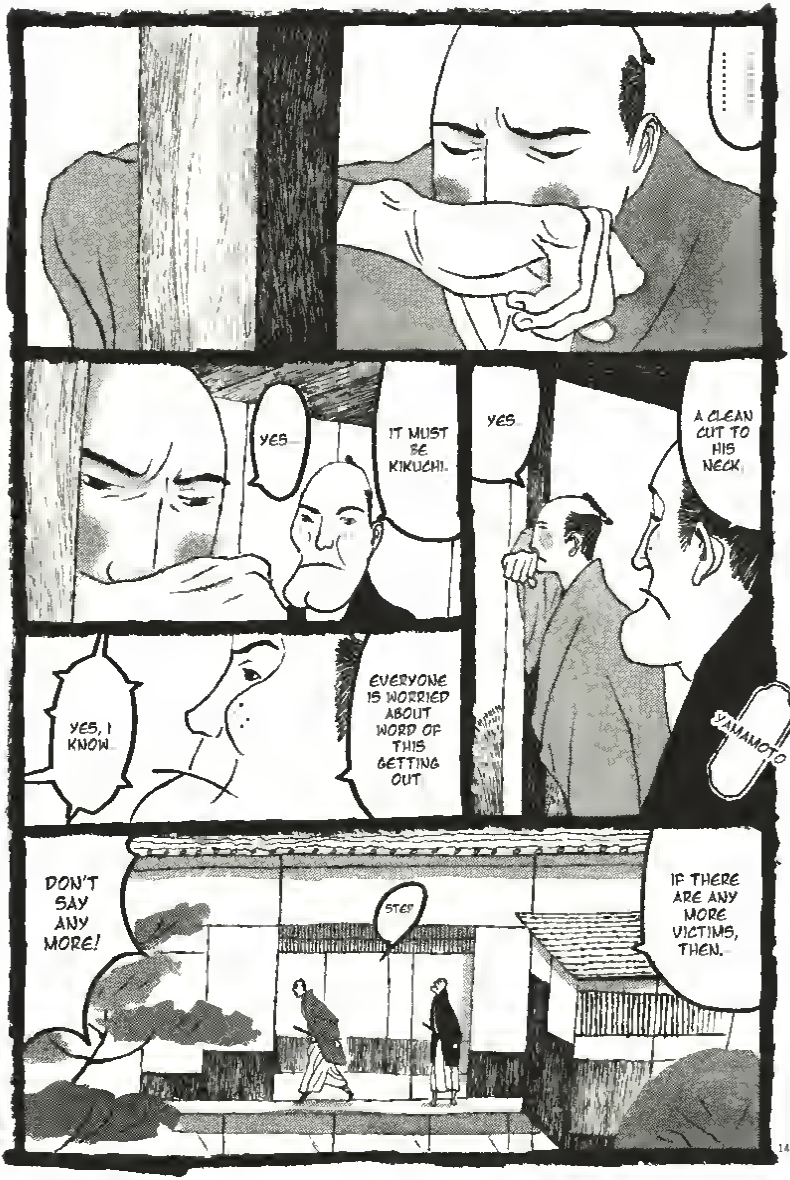
HEY YOU!
びくっ
MEOW!
キャン
YEAH, YOU!
YOU!
キャン
キャン
GO AWAY!
SCRAM!
キャン
WOOF!
キャン
JEEZ, SO DAMN LOUD.
NOW!
LEAVE HIM BE.
DIED IN PRISON?
WHO? KIKUCHI?
SENOU SOUICHIROU

YES
RIGHT, GENJI?
OR SO THE PRISON GUARDS SAY
THAT MUST BE A MISTAKE.
YES.
BUT IF IT IS A MISTAKE...
THEN HE MUST BE IN EDO.
YES.
EDO...

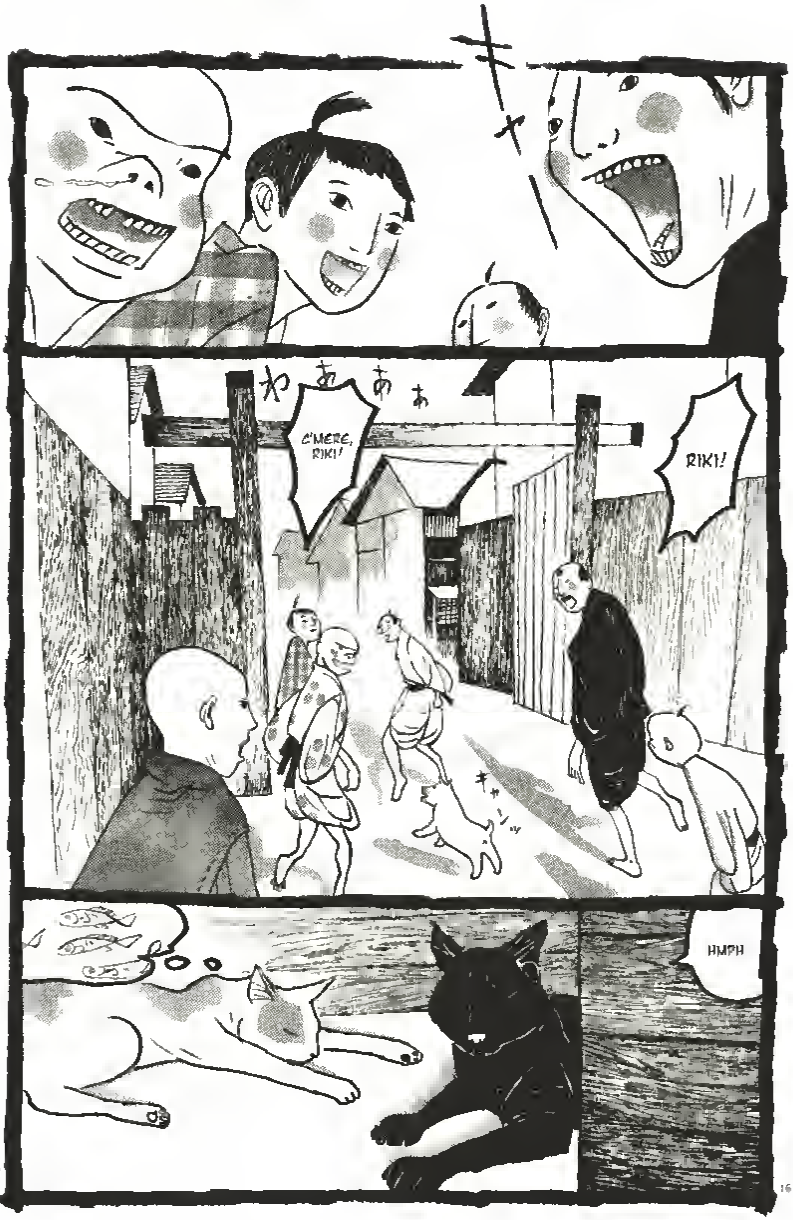
THE MAN KILLED LAST NIGHT MUST ALSO BE HIS DOING
A DEMON WITH A NEVER-ENDING THIRST FOR BLOOD.
A DEMON EXISTS WITHIN THAT MAN.
BUT WOULD THE KODENMACHI OFFICIALS REALLY TELL SUCH A LIE?

HE SHALL KEEP ON KILLING AS LONG AS HE LIVES.
I CAN FEEL THE OMINOUS PRESENCE LEFT BY HIM IN TOWN
TAP
COMING RIGHT UP!
MITSU, MORE SWEET RED-BEAN SOUP, PLEASE!
HMM...
GO AWAY!
ぴょん
ぴょん

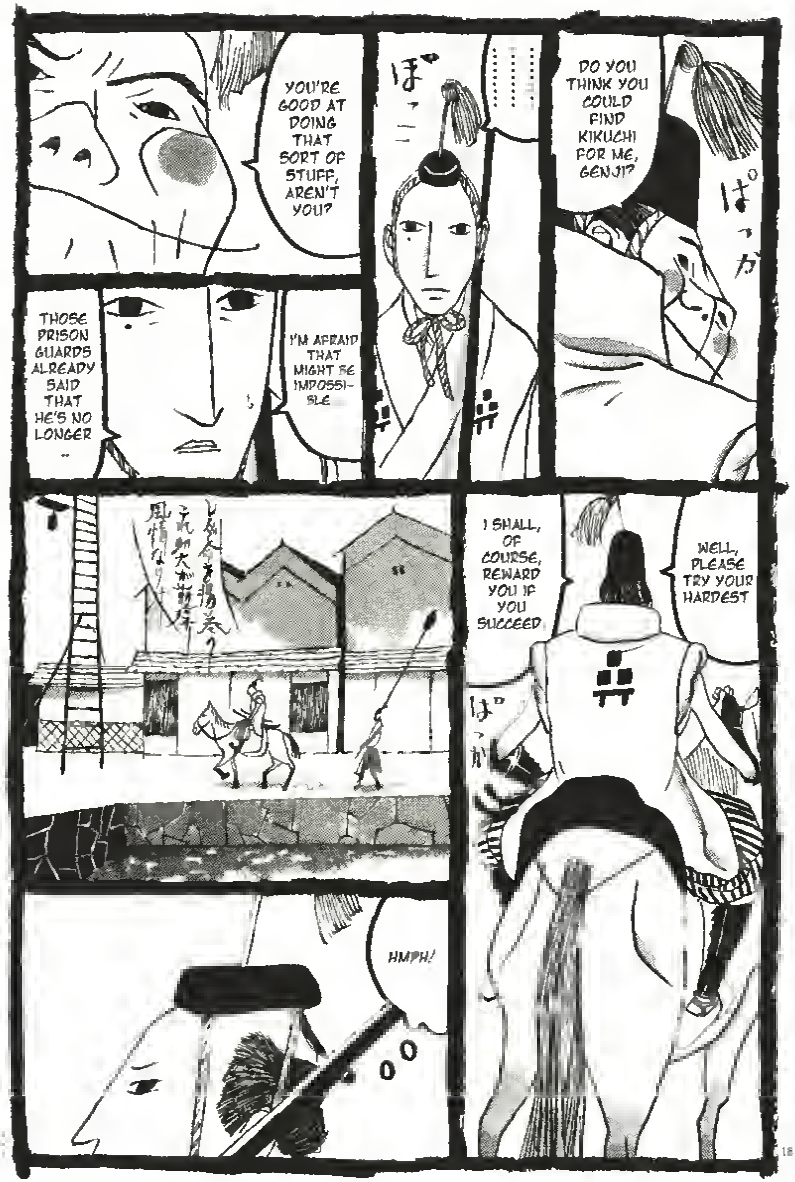
MORI SAZATAROU
ぁあぁ


.....
A CLEAN CUT TO HIS NECK.
YAMAMOTO
YES.
IT MUST BE KIKUCHI.
YES.
EVERYONE IS WORRIED ABOUT WORD OF THIS GETTING OUT.
YES, I KNOW.
IF THERE ARE ANY MORE VICTIMS, THEN.
STEP
DON'T SAY ANY MORE!

I SHALL TAKE CARE OF HIM MYSELF!
I VOW TO CUT HIM DOWN!


わぁぁぁ
C'MERE, RIKI!
RIKI!
キャン!!
HMPH

ぱっか
ぱっか
FINE WORDS.
ぱっか
A DEMON WITH A NEVER-ENDING THIRST FOR BLOOD
ぱっか
ぱっか
I'D LIKE TO SAY SUCH WORDS MYSELF.


DO YOU THINK YOU COULD FIND KIKUCHI FOR ME, GENJI?
ぽっか
ぼーっ
……
YOU'RE GOOD AT DOING THAT SORT OF STUFF, AREN'T YOU?
I'M AFRAID THAT MIGHT BE IMPOSSIBLE
THOSE PRISON GUARDS ALREADY SAID THAT HE'S NO LONGER …
WELL, PLEASE TRY YOUR HARDEST
I SHALL, OF COURSE, REWARD YOU IF YOU SUCCEED
ぽっか
HMPH!

MNN.
HEE HEE
さ〜あぁぁ
!
おぉぉぉ

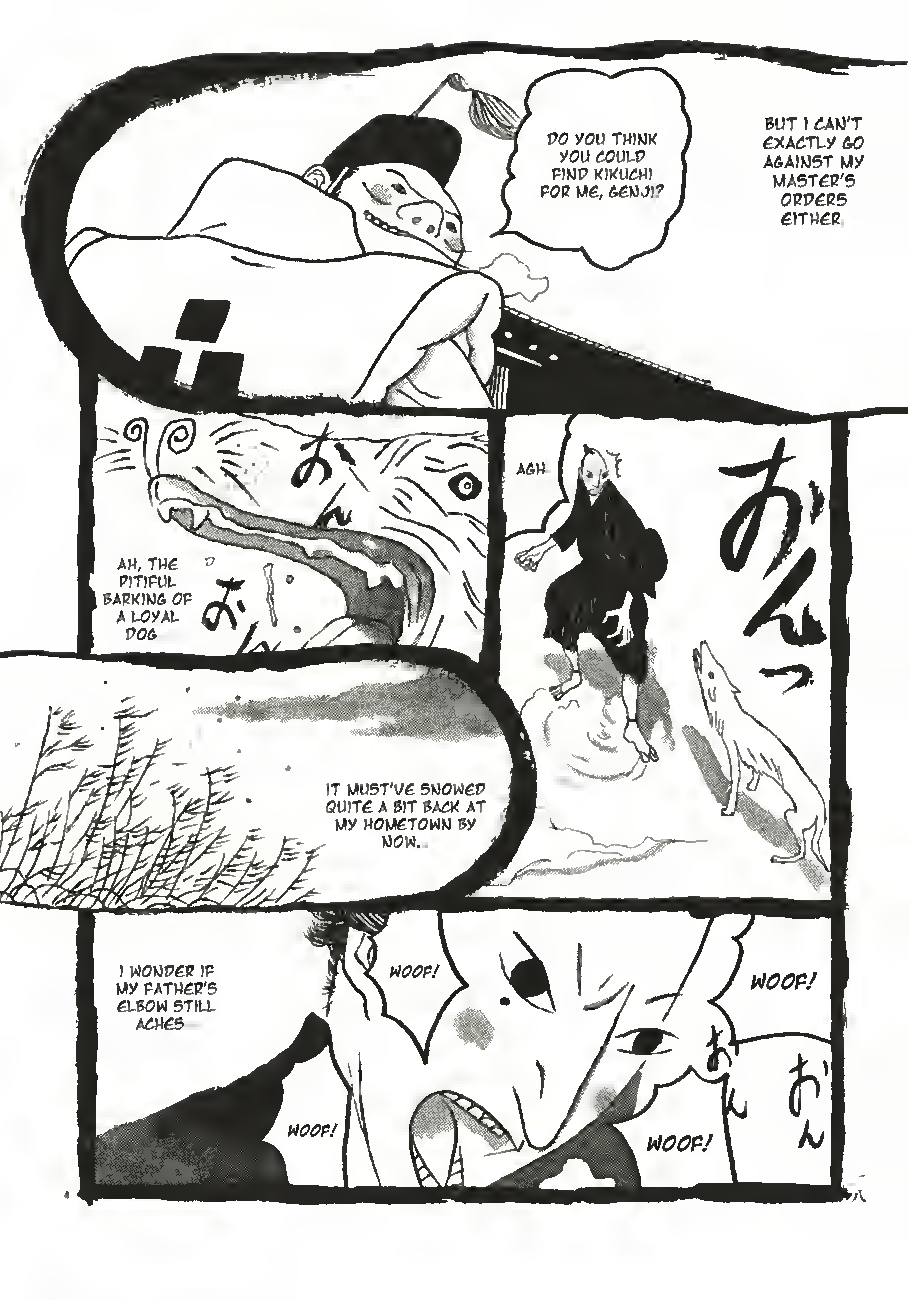
ハァ
あ
あ
あ
HMPH.
LOOKS LIKE IT'S ABOUT TO GET COLD

CHAPTER 52

THE LOYAL DOG BARKS AT THE SETTING SUN

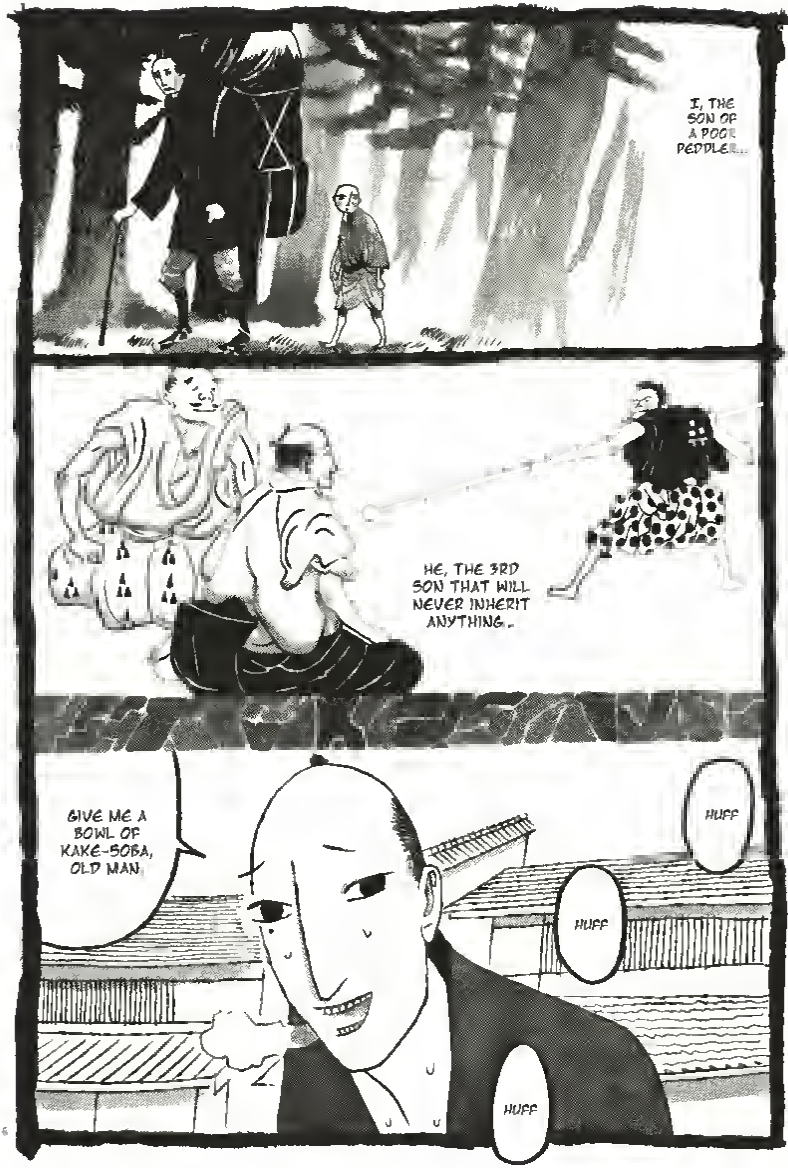
"THESE PEOPLE ARE ALL THE SAME AS MAGGOTS CRAWLING ABOUT IN THE SEWAGE," KENJI THOUGHT.
EXCUSE ME THEN.
AH...
TRY SOME-WHERE ELSE!
I AIN'T EVER HEARD OF NO KIKUCHI
SPIT
WHEW.
FIND A RONIN THAT I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF HE'S DEAD OR ALIVE...

AS IF ANYONE WOULD EVER WANT TO DIG AROUND THIS PILE O' HUMAN FILTH TO FIND HIM.
I DUN' KNOW.
PUNNO
IS HE YOUR TYPE!?
WHY DO YOU EVEN WANT TO KNOW WHERE A THUG LIKE HIM MIGHT BE ANYWAYS!?
I HEARD THAT ASSASSIN DIED IN THE FIRE THAT BROKE OUT IN KODENMACHI PRISON... SERVES HIM RIGHT...
NOW GIVE ME SOME MONEY!

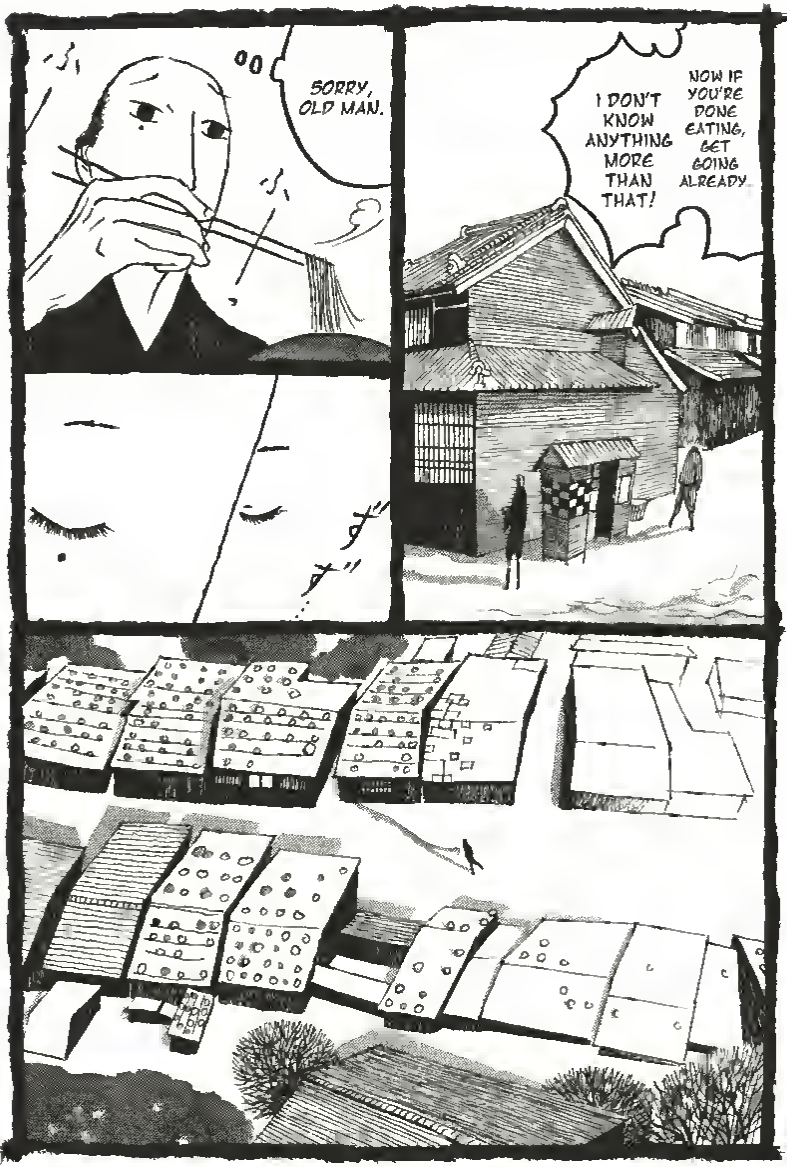

DO YOU THINK YOU COULD FIND KIKUCHI FOR ME, GENJI?
BUT I CAN'T EXACTLY GO AGAINST MY MASTER'S ORDERS EITHER.
AGH.
AH, THE PITIFUL BARKING OF A LOYAL DOG
IT MUST'VE SNOWED QUITE A BIT BACK AT MY HOMETOWN BY NOW.
I WONDER IF MY FATHER'S ELBOW STILL ACHES
WOOF!
WOOF!
WOOF!
WOOF!

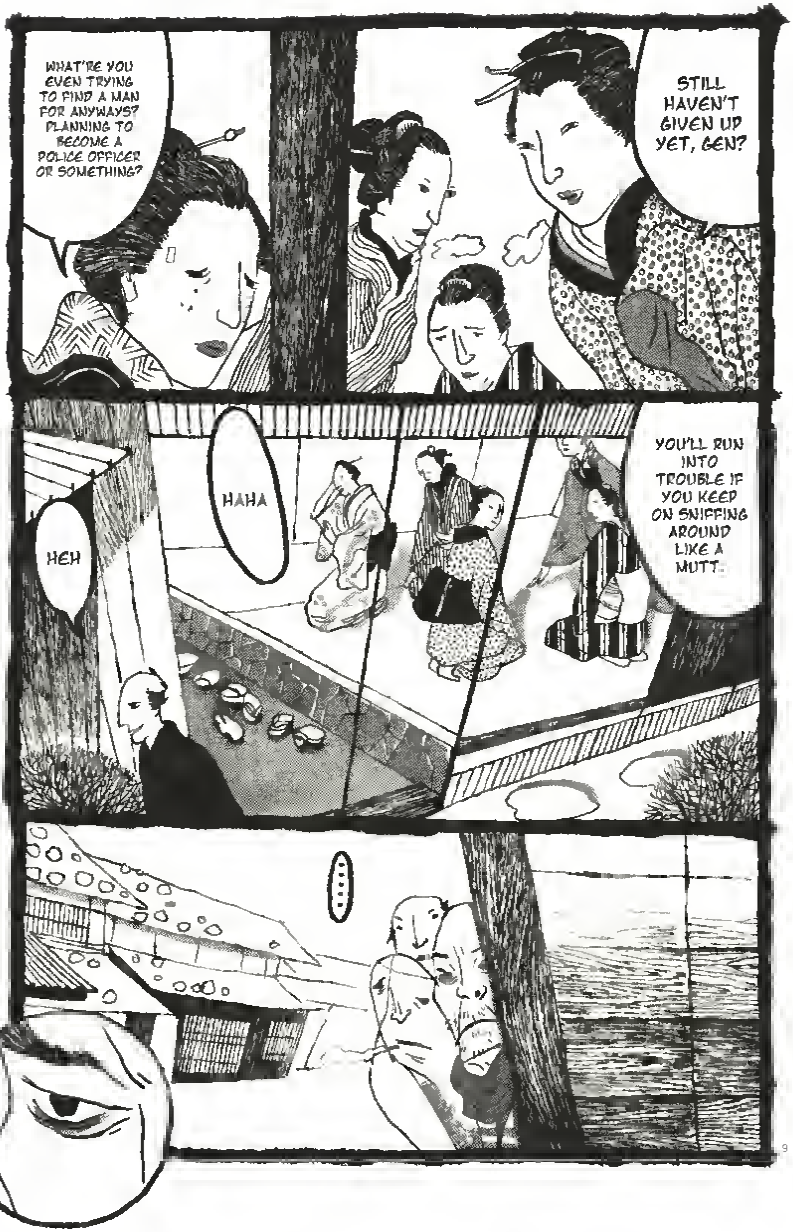
MY IMPATIENT HOMOSEXUAL MASTER WHO CAN'T EVEN GO 3 DAYS WITHOUT SEEING HIS MALE PROSTITUE.
MIKOSHI DAIZABUROU, MY MASTER AND THE 3RD SON OF A HATAMOTO*.
GAHAHAHA!
NICKNAMED THE "CRAB MASTER" BY THE OTHER SERVANTS,
AND A LAUGHINGSTOCK OF EVEN THE NORMAL TOWNSFOLK
WOOF! WOOF!

*HIGH-RANK VASSALS SERVING A SHOGUN

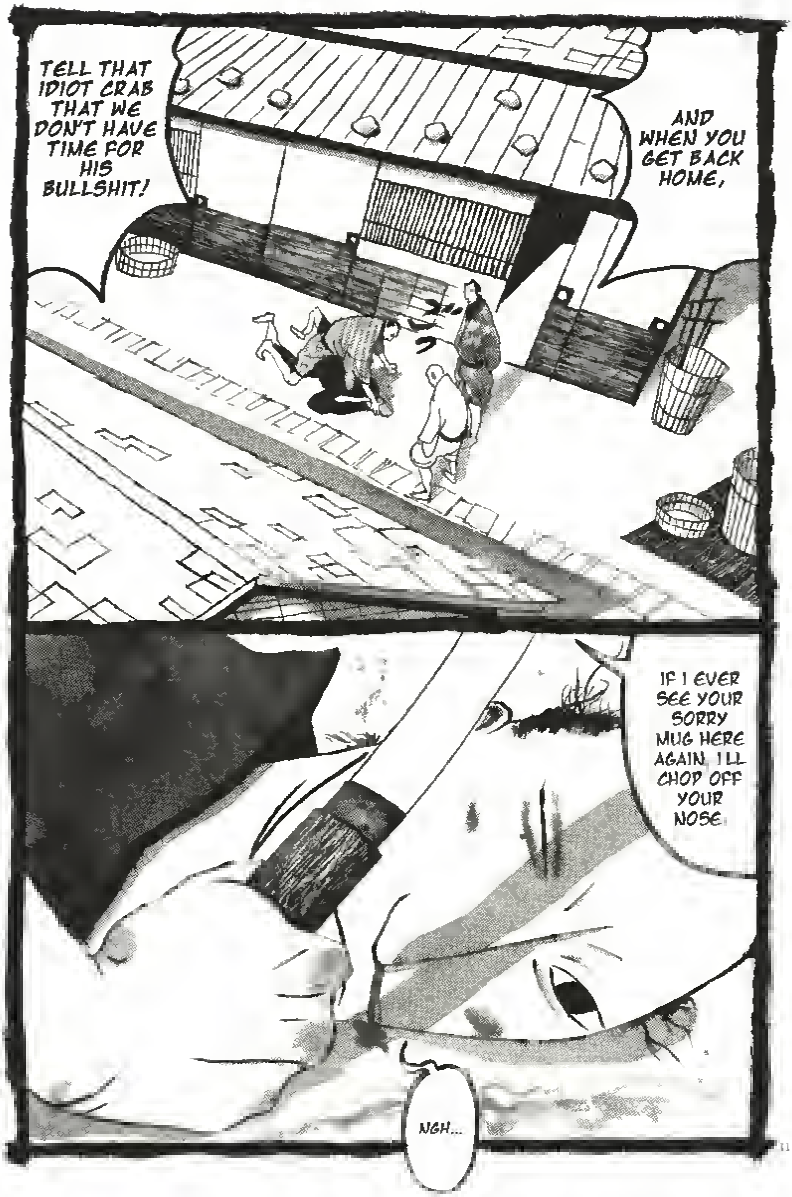

I, THE SON OF A POOR PEDDLER...
HE, THE 3RD SON THAT WILL NEVER INHERIT ANYTHING..
GIVE ME A BOWL OF KAKE-SOBA, OLD MAN.
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

はあ
はあ
はあ
二八
SURE THING.
SO GEN I HEARD YOU WERE GOING AROUND LOOKING FOR A RONIN.
!
IT'D BE BEST FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY TO NOT STICK YOUR NOSE IN ANY FURTHER
A LOT OF BAD TEMPERED FOLK OUT THERE.
MM HMM.
FROM WHAT I HEAR THERE'S A GUY CALLED RED-EYES.
WHO HANGS AROUND WITH KIKUCHI
こっ
CLATTER


SORRY, OLD MAN.
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING MORE THAN THAT!
NOW IF YOU'RE DONE EATING, GET GOING ALREADY.


WHAT'RE YOU EVEN TRYING TO FIND A MAN FOR ANYWAYS? PLANNING TO BECOME A POLICE OFFICER OR SOMETHING?
STILL HAVEN'T GIVEN UP YET, GEN?
HEH
HAHA
YOU'LL RUN INTO TROUBLE IF YOU KEEP ON SNIFFING AROUND LIKE A MUTT.
!
...

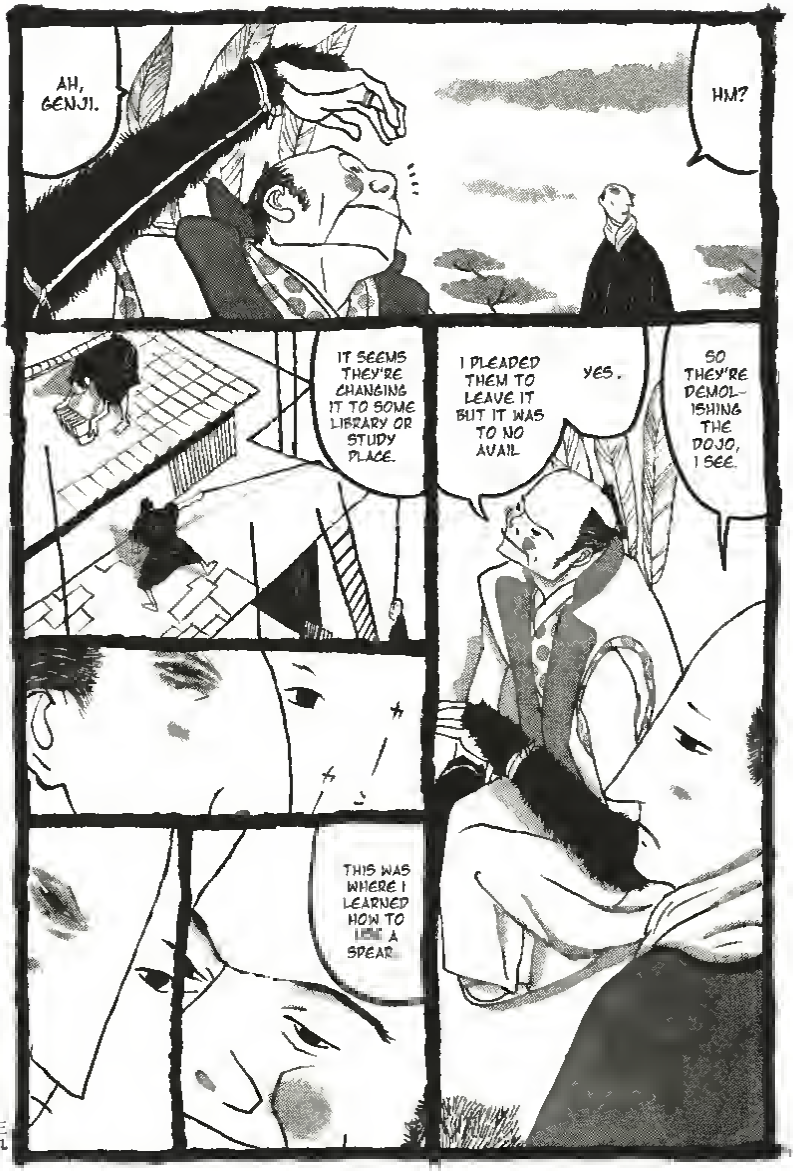
WHO SAID YOU COULD INTRUDE ON OUR TURF!?
HAHH!
DON'T YOU BE GIVING US THAT CONDE-SCENDING LOOK WHEN YOU'RE JUST A MUTT THAT ONLY KNOWS HOW TO SHAKE ITS TAIL AT ITS MASTER!

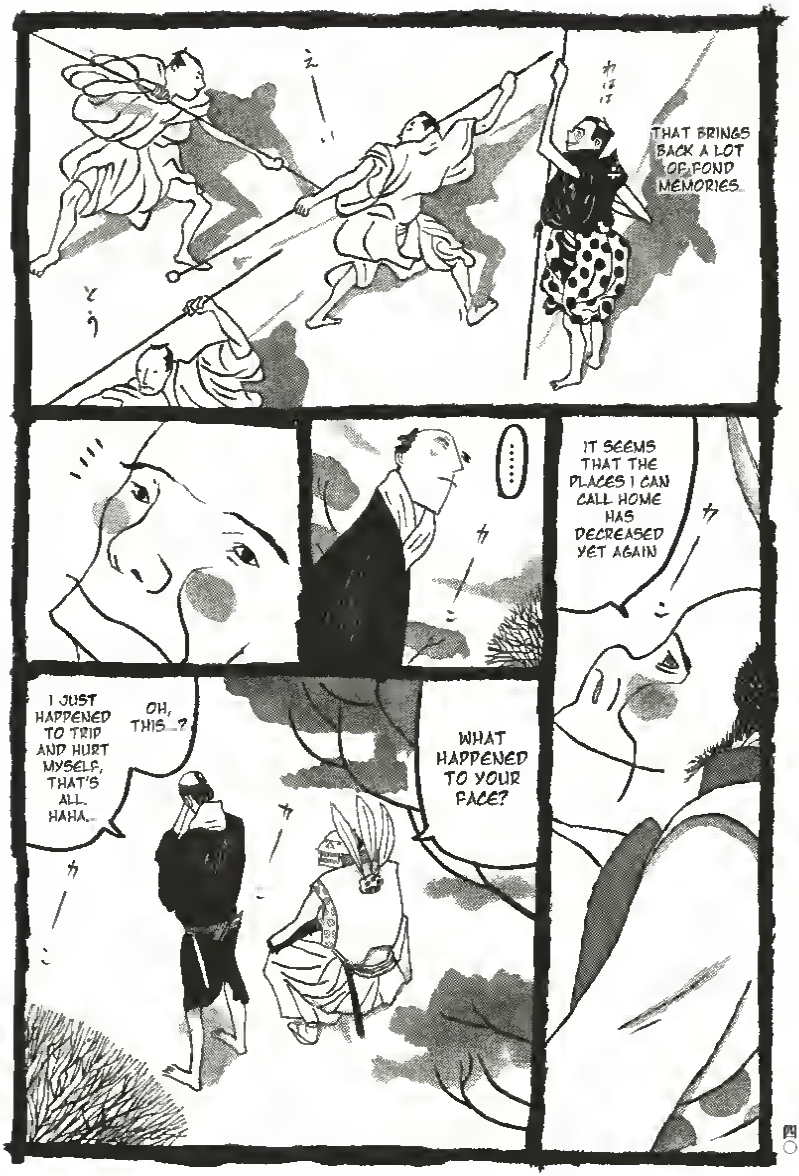

TELL THAT IDIOT CRAB THAT WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR HIS BULLSHIT!
AND WHEN YOU GET BACK HOME,
IF I EVER SEE YOUR SORRY MUG HERE AGAIN, I'LL CHOP OFF YOUR NOSE.
NGH...

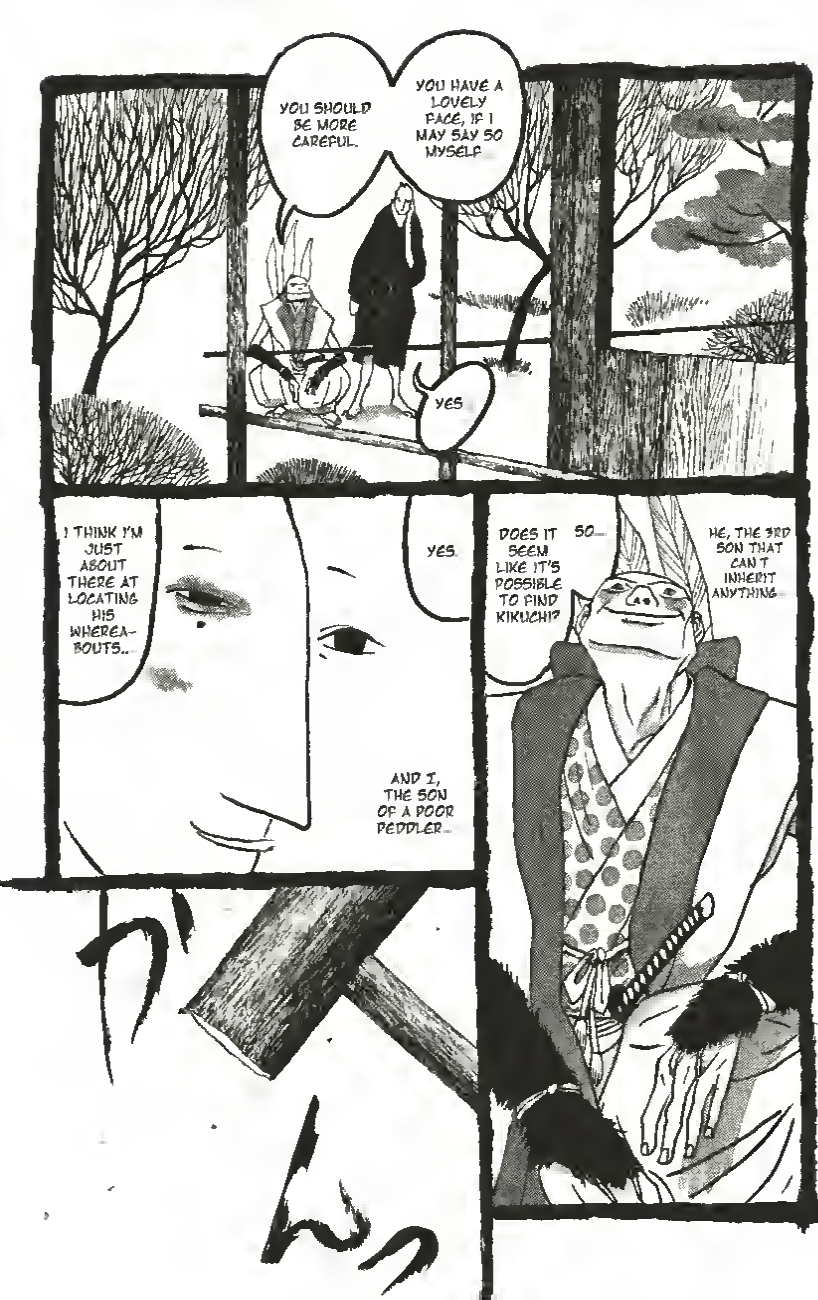
ギギ
はは
UGH...
QUITTING NOW'D BE THE BEST THING TO DO. I'LL SEE IF I CAN GET LEAVE OR SOMETHING
TOO!
THAT DOES IT. I'M SICK OF THIS

SLAM!
I'LL GO BACK TO MY HOME TOWN AND...
HMPH.

MIKOSHI
RESIDENCES.


AH, GENJI.
HM?
SO THEY'RE DEMOLISHING THE DOJO, I SEE.
YES.
I PLEADED THEM TO LEAVE IT BUT IT WAS TO NO AVAIL
IT SEEMS THEY'RE CHANGING IT TO SOME LIBRARY OR STUDY PLACE.
THIS WAS WHERE I LEARNED HOW TO USE A SPEAR.

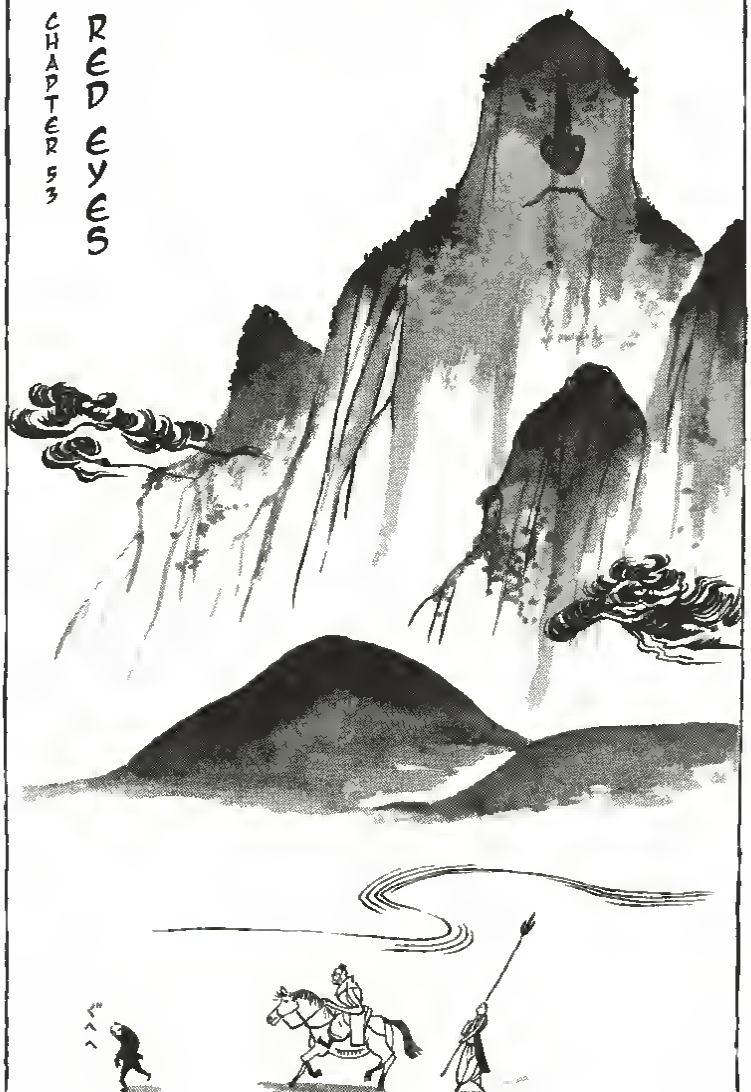

THAT BRINGS BACK A LOT OF FOND MEMORIES.
IT SEEMS THAT THE PLACES I CAN CALL HOME HAS DECREASED YET AGAIN
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FACE?
OH, THIS...?
I JUST HAPPENED TO TRIP AND HURT MYSELF, THAT'S ALL. HAHA...


YOU SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL.
YOU HAVE A LOVELY FACE, IF I MAY SAY SO MYSELF.
YES.
I THINK I'M JUST ABOUT THERE AT LOCATING HIS WHEREA-BOUTS..
YES.
AND I, THE SON OF A POOR PEDDLER..
DOES IT SEEM LIKE IT'S POSSIBLE TO FIND KIKUCHI?
SO—
HE, THE 3RD SON THAT CAN'T INHERIT ANYTHING.
カ

I'M SURE I'LL BE ABLE TO FIND HIM.

CHAPTER 53

RED EYES



KIKUCHI'S RUMOURED COMPANION CALLED "RED EYES" WAS NOT A NORMAL MAN.
GYOHO!
HEY LITTLE BIRDIE BIRDIES! HURRY UP!
OHHH OHH OHHHHH!
HIDING IN THE TREES!
HURRY UP AND FIND THEM BUGS,
.....

.....
KYAHAHA! THOSE LITTLE BIRDIES O'ER THERE...
THAT'S WHY I TOLD 'EM TO HURRY UP BEFORE THE BUGS GO HIDING
AND THAT IT'D START TO SNOW FROM NOON TODAY
わぁ
HIS EYES ARE...
YUP. THAT'S WHAT I TOLD 'EM ALRIGHT.
ひゅ
ひゅ
ひゅ
ひゅ
SAID IT'D RAIN TOMORROW
EWW...

NOT SAYIN'!
SO ANYWAYS, WHERE'S KIKUCHI?
YOU GON' HIRE HIM FOR REVENGE?
IF IT'S MONEY YOU WANT, I'LL PAY YOU.
BOSS AIN'T TAKING ANY CUSTOMERS NO MORE!
GYAHO!
THEN GO BRING YOUR MASTER, YA BIG DUNCE!
UH NO... I'M ONLY LOOKING FOR HIM UNDER MY MASTERS ORDERS
JAHO.

ISN'T IT A LITTLE TOO COLD FOR A SWIM?
WHY'RE YOU IN A POND ANYWAYS?
SHIT!
QUIET DOWN, WILL YA?
TRYIN' TO HIRE AN ASSASSIN BY SENDIN' A MESSENGER.. WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA!?
IF I TAKE A SHIT HERE, I DUN NEED TA SPEND NO TIME CLEANING MESELF.
THE HELL'S WRONG WITH THIS GUY

IN ANY CASE, I DECIDED TO LET RED EYES MEET MASTER DAIZABUROU.
YOU'RE QUITE THE INTERESTING FELLOW, AREN'T YOU, RED EYES!?
AFTER ALL, MY MASTER IS THE TYPE TO LIKE ECCENTRIC INDIVIDUALS.
THE SAME TO YOU, SIR SOME STRANGE CLOTHES YOU'RE WEARING THERE.
GYOHEH
HEH
TWO LIKE MINDS, HUH...

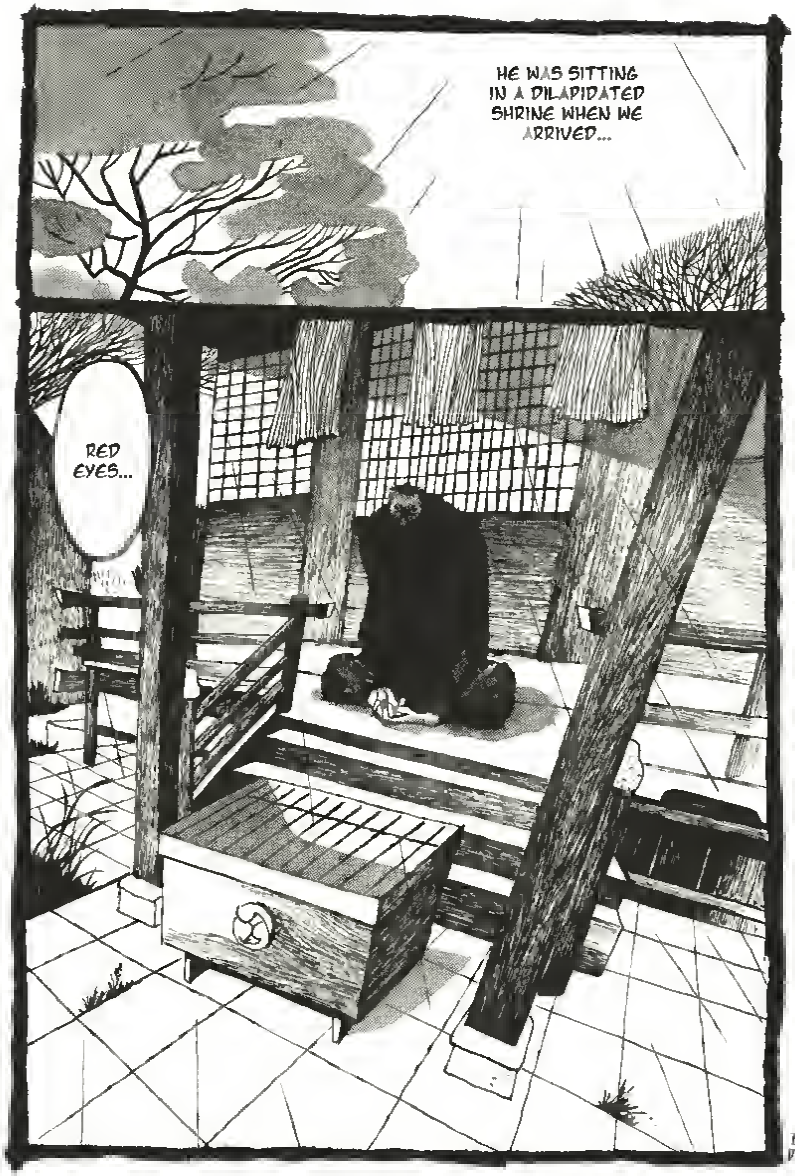
OH... UMM... YUP, IT'S MY JOB TO BRING IN CUST-OMERS.
WELL!?
SO TELL ME, RED EYES! CAN YOU INTRODUCE ME TO KIKUCHI SHINNOSUKE?
BUT?
I'D LIKE TA GRANT YOUR WISH BUT...
BUT BOSS TRUSTS ME 'CAUSE OF THESE GOOD EYES.
MY HEAD AIN'T SO BRIGHT,
あっ！
BOSS IS BUSY CLEARIN' OUT MOUNTAIN MONKEYS IN SHINANO SO HE SAID HE AIN'T TAKING NO CUSTOMERS.

!!!!
MOUNTAIN MONKEYS?
HEY!
NO, NO.
GOT A FULL BELLY, CAN'T EAT NO MORE.
AH, MY BAD FOR NOT NOTICING. YOU MUST WANT SOME MORE FOOD, RIGHT?
GIVE ME SOME SAKE INSTEAD!
HEH

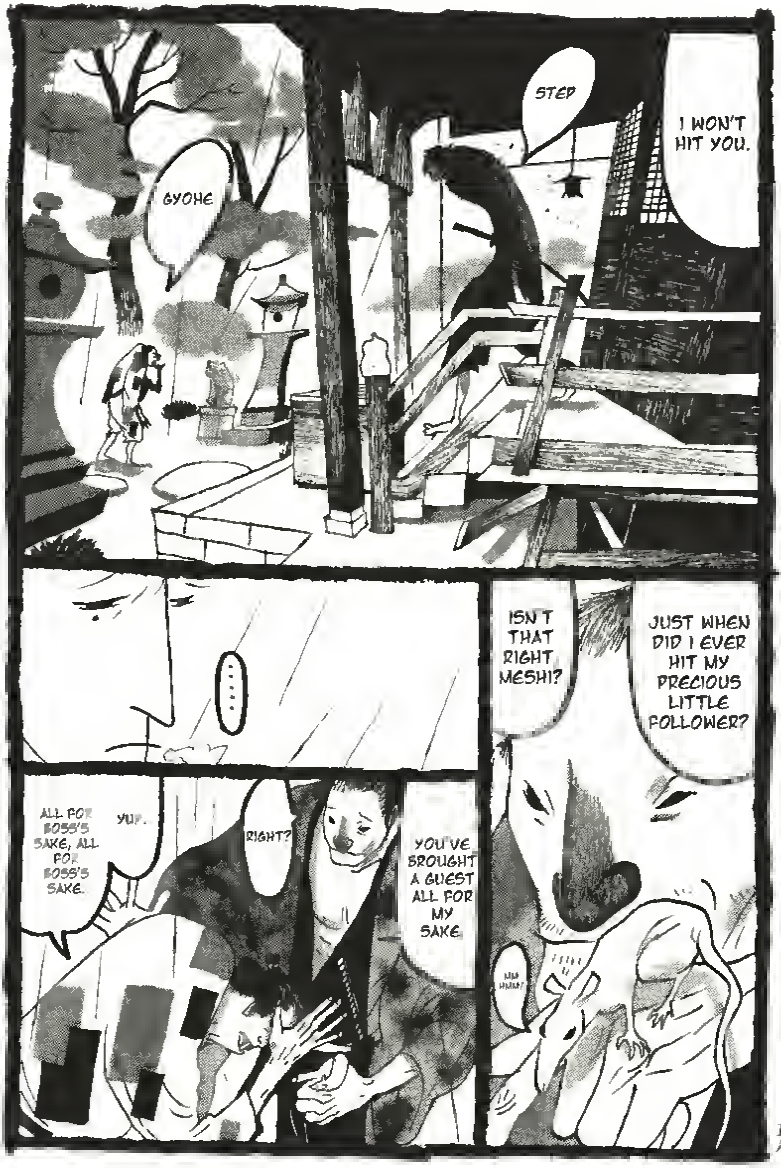
DARN, I SHOULD'VE PREPARED MY STRAW RAINCOAT.
IN THE END, DESPITE HIS GRUMBLING, RED EYES LED MASTER AND I TO KIKUCHI. IT RAINED DURING OUR JOURNEY.
HM?
KEHA!
THE RAIN WILL TURN TA SNOW SOON ENOUGH
.....
THAT'S WHAT THEM BIRDIES SAID!

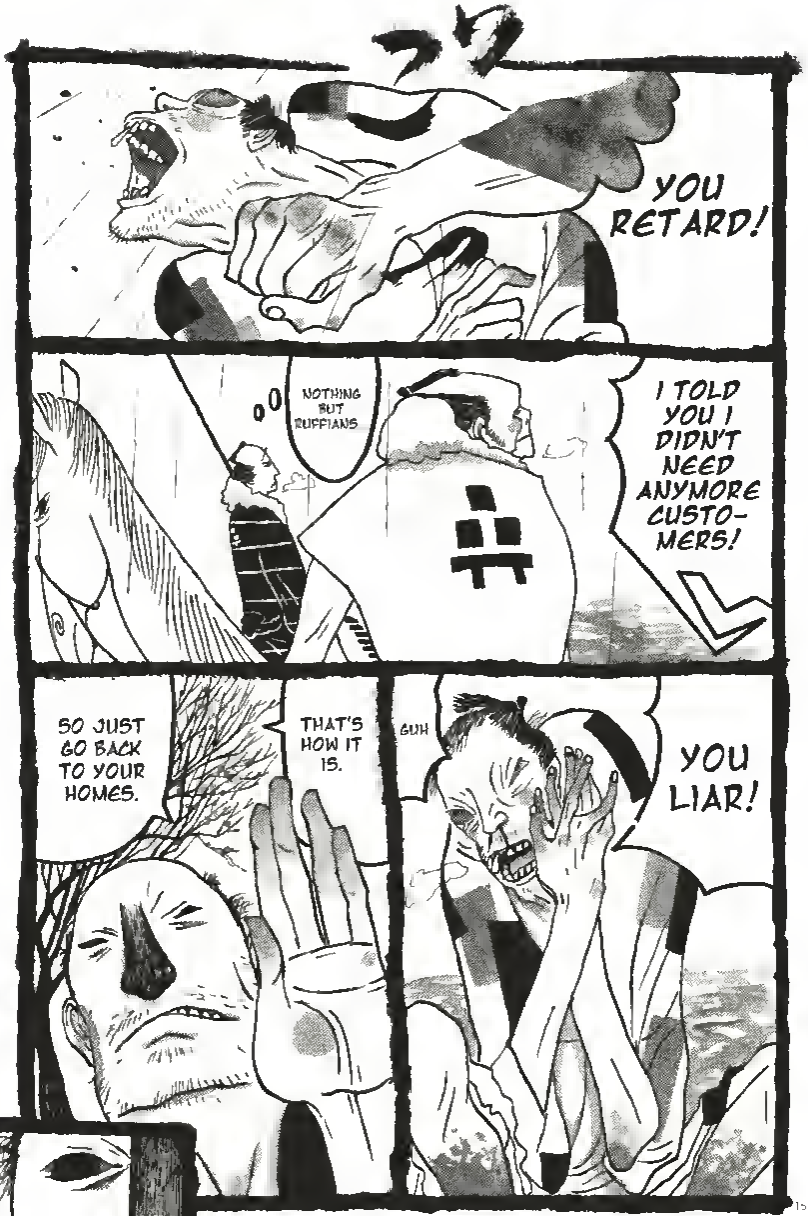
YES, INDEED!
SO WHAT, EVEN A FANCY HATAMOTO LIKE YOU GOTS A MAN YOU WANT TA KILL?
?!
カハハ
HE'S A GREAT OAF WHO CHOSE THE WRONG ERA TO BE BORN!
YES!
IS HE SOME WORTHLESS RERSON?

IS HE GOOD AT FIGHTIN'?
HE BELIEVES HIMSELF TO BE AN EXPERT,
BUT WHO KNOWS IF WHAT HE SAYS IS TRUE OR FALSE!?
I HAD A VERY BAD FEELING...


HE WAS SITTING IN A DILAPIDATED SHRINE WHEN WE ARRIVED...
RED EYES...

RED EYES BEGAN TO ACT EVEN MORE STRANGELY THAN EVER.
AU.
AU.
AU.
MN.
NO!
COME.
I DUN' WANNA COME!
YOU... YOU GON' HIT ME, I KNOW IT!


GYOHE
STEP
I WON'T HIT YOU.
...
ISN'T THAT RIGHT, MESHI?
JUST WHEN DID I EVER HIT MY PRECIOUS LITTLE FOLLOWER?
ALL FOR BOSS'S SAKE, ALL FOR BOSS'S SAKE.
YUP.
RIGHT?
YOU'VE BROUGHT A GUEST ALL FOR MY SAKE.


YOU RETARD!
I TOLD YOU I DIDN'T NEED ANYMORE CUSTO-MERS!
NOTHING BUT RUFFIANS
YOU LIAR!
GUH
THAT'S HOW IT IS.
SO JUST GO BACK TO YOUR HOMES.

YOU SHOULDN'T MAKE A FINE HORSE LIKE THIS WALK THROUGH MUD AND SLUDGE.
OH? WHAT A SPLENDID HORSE.
I'LL GIVE YOU A 100 RYOU!
WELL, SEE YOU THEN.

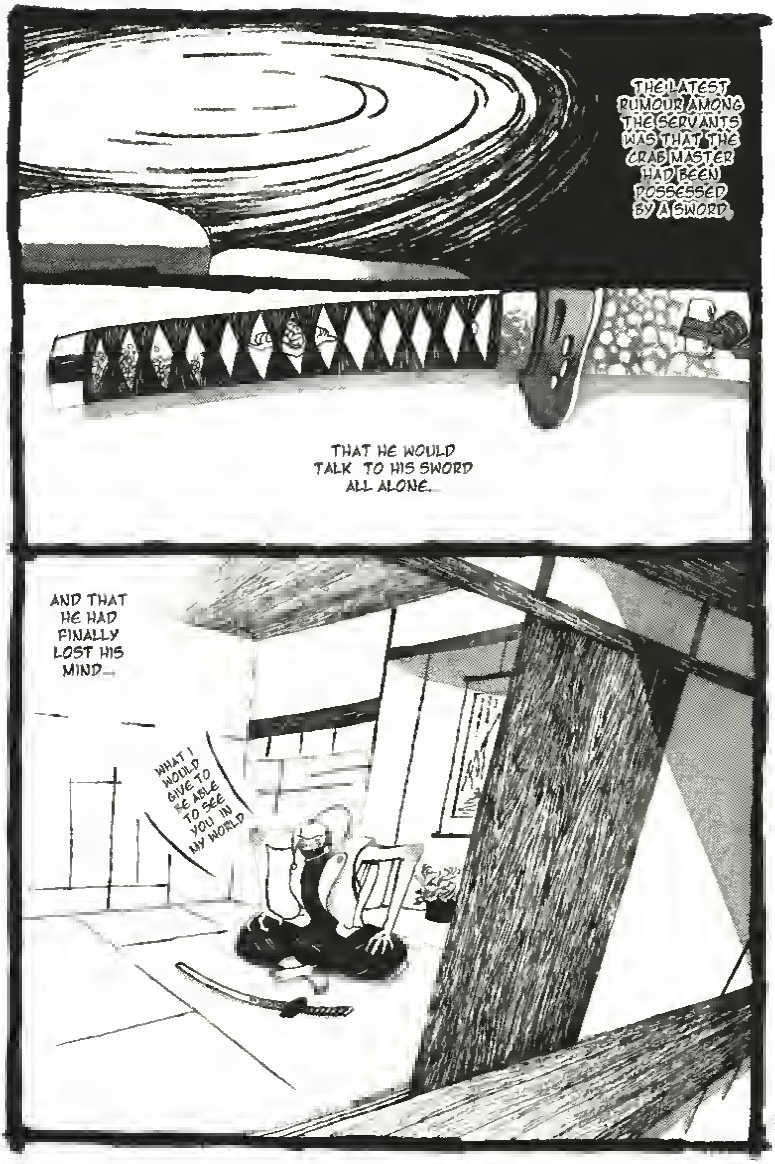
"RYOU" STANDARD GOLD PIECE COIN

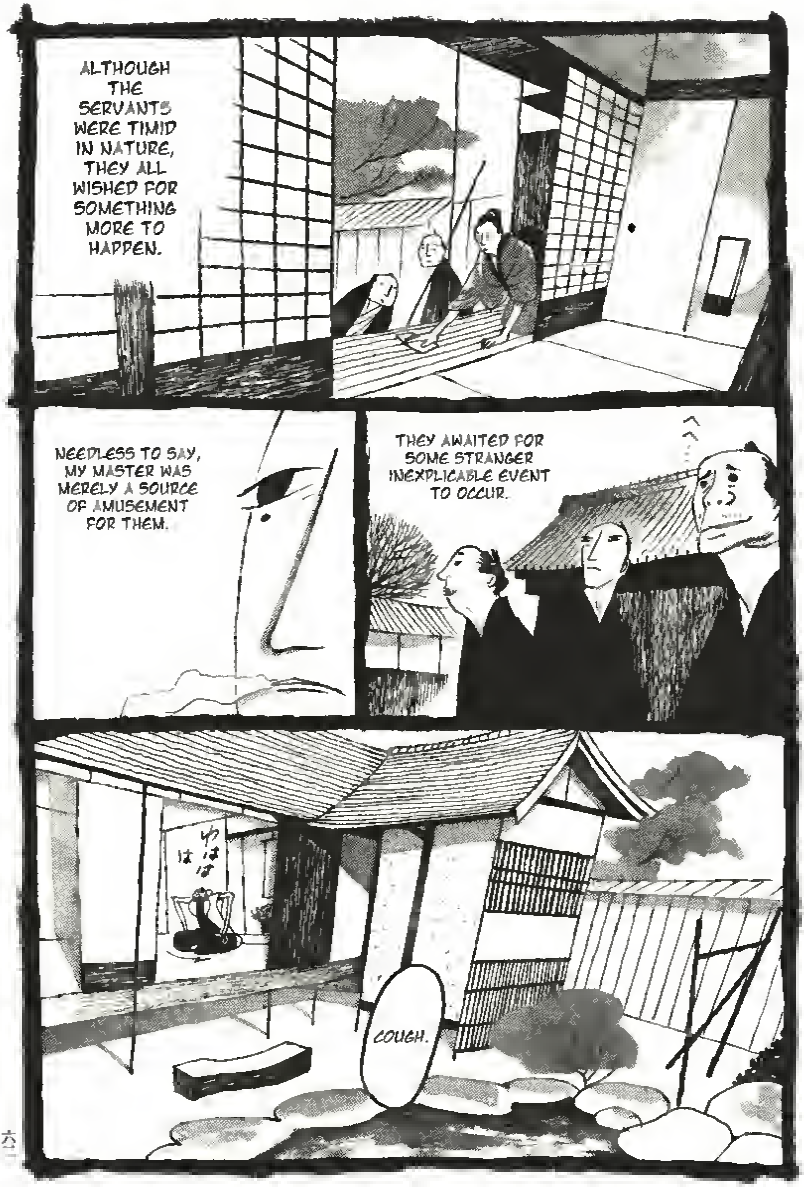
ME.
TO KILL WHOM?
GYOHO
OH MY...

DUEL WITH ME AND TRY TO TAKE MY HEAD!
ON THE NIGHT OF THE NEXT FULL MOON,
ちゅんっ

CHAPTER 54

A CRAB UNDER THE MOONLIT NIGHT


THE LATEST RUMOUR AMONG THE SERVANTS WAS THAT THE CRAB MASTER HAD BEEN POSSESSED BY A SWORD.
THAT HE WOULD TALK TO HIS SWORD ALL ALONE...
AND THAT HE HAD FINALLY LOST HIS MIND...
WHAT I WOULD GIVE TO BE ABLE TO SEE YOU IN MY WORLD


ALTHOUGH THE SERVANTS WERE TIMID IN NATURE, THEY ALL WISHED FOR SOMETHING MORE TO HAPPEN.
NEEDLESS TO SAY, MY MASTER WAS MERELY A SOURCE OF AMUSEMENT FOR THEM.
THEY AWAITED FOR SOME STRANGER INEXPLICABLE EVENT TO OCCUR.
COUGH.

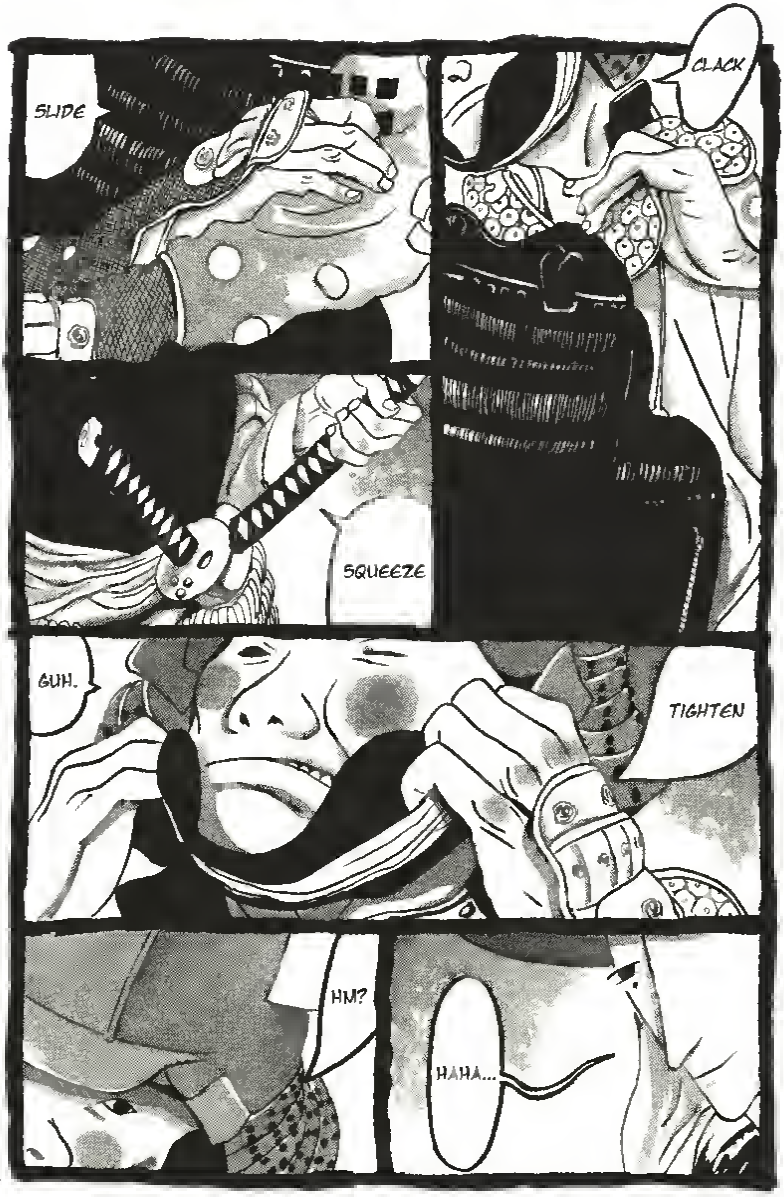
IGNORANCE IS BLISS, I SUPPOSE.
This headband is of purple thread.
By her leave he wears this colour, unfading as his affections, eternal as the evergreen pine.*
TROT
TROT
NIGHT BEGAN TO SET UPON THE TOWN

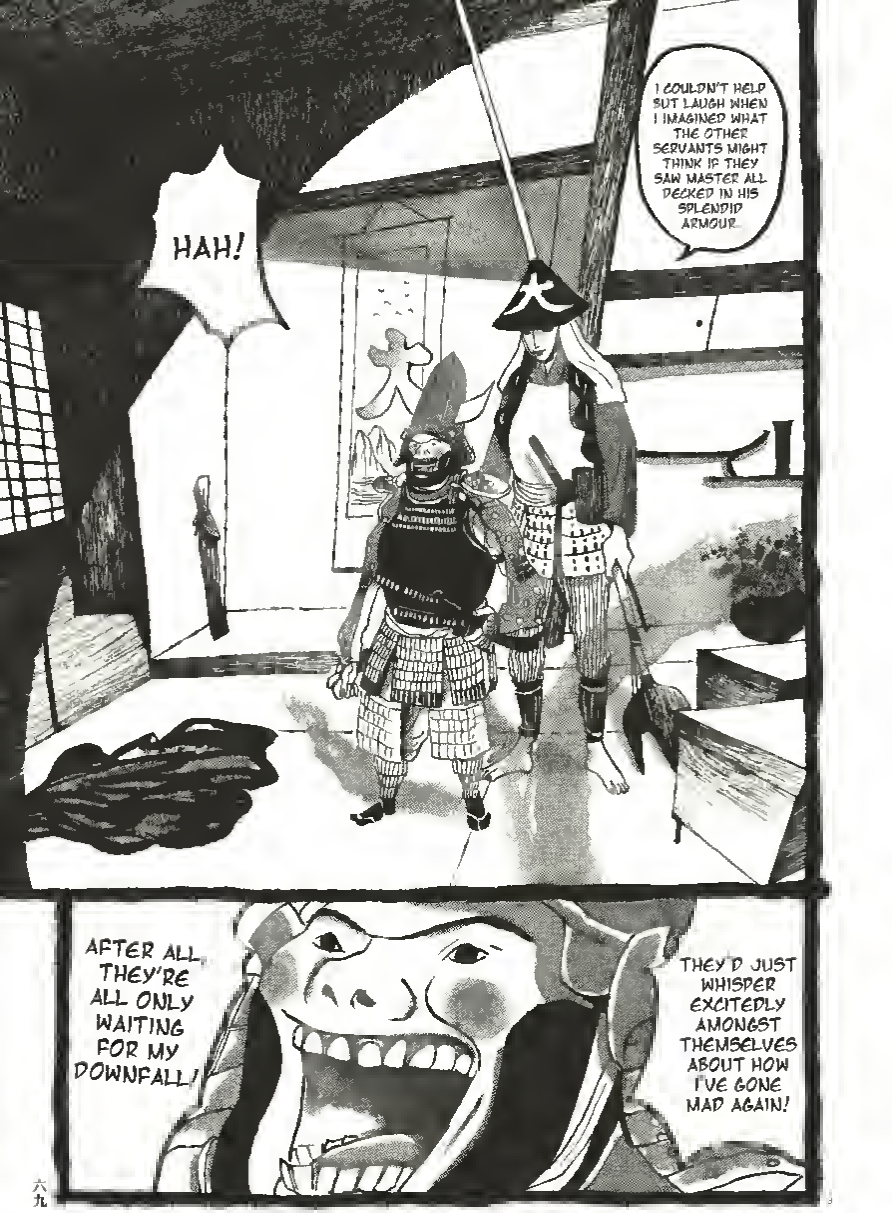
*DAIZABUROU IS RECITING THE LINES FROM THE POPULAR KABUKI PLAY, "SUKEROKU."

A MOON QUITE FIT TO DECORATE THE STAGE, IS IT NOT, GENJI?
TROT
TROT
MNN.
LEAD ROLE: MIKOSHI DAIZABUROU
THE VENDETTA PLAY,
TROT
TROT
THAT DAY...
TROT
HAHA...

DUEL WITH ME AND TRY TO TAKE MY HEAD!
THE IDIOT WHO CHALLENGED THE ASSASSIN.
AS YOU WISH.
THE FOOL WHO ACCEPTED THE CHALLENGE
GYAHOHO!
AND THE DOLT'S INTA LAUGHING FIT.

THE PLACE WILL BE HONJO-AIOICHOU, AT THE ABAN-DONED MANSION!
THE TIME WILL BE 2 IN THE MORNING!
TONIGHT, HUH...


SLIDE
CLACK
SQUEEZE
GUH.
TIGHTEN
HM?
HAHA...


I COULDN'T HELP BUT LAUGH WHEN I IMAGINED WHAT THE OTHER SERVANTS MIGHT THINK IF THEY SAW MASTER ALL DECKED IN HIS SPLENDID ARMOUR...
HAH!
AFTER ALL, THEY'RE ALL ONLY WAITING FOR MY DOWNFALL!
THEY'D JUST WHISPER EXCITEDLY AMONGST THEMSELVES ABOUT HOW I'VE GONE MAD AGAIN!

DON'T SAY SUCH STUPID THINGS! THIS PLAY IS NO ONE'S BUT MINE!
PERHAPS WE OUGHT TO ASK SENOU FOR ASSISTANCE? I'M SURE WITH HIM...
.....
YOU AND I ARE ENOUGH TO COMPLETE IT.
I, WITH THE LEAD ROLE.

BITE
AH.
AND IF YOU COULD SO KINDLY BE MY AUDIENCE...
MN.
UGH

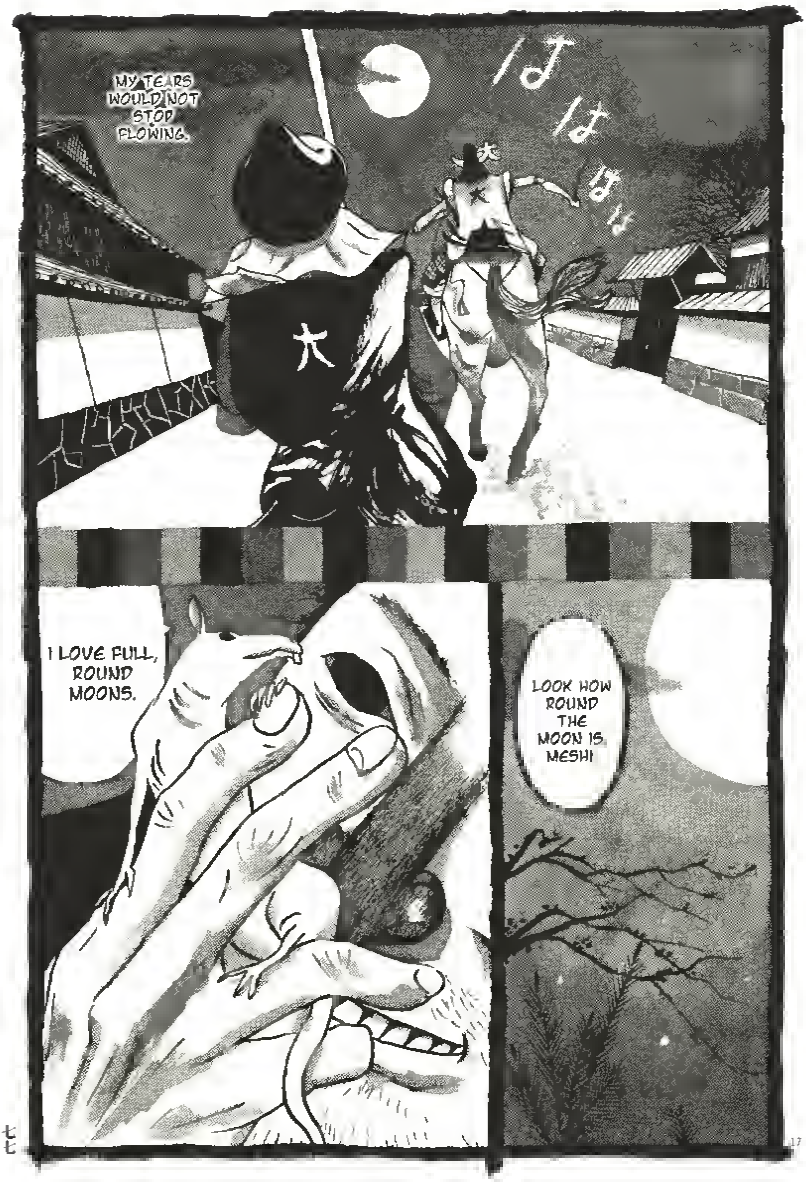
OHHH! I CAN SEE YOU, KUNIFUSA! AT LAST, I AM ABLE TO SEE YOUR SPLENDID FORM IN THE REAL WORLD!
THIS MUST BE PROOF THAT I'VE BECOME A TRUE WARRIOR!

?
I HAVE NO REGRETS LEFT IN MY LIFE!
NOW WOULD YOU BE SO KIND AS TO SMILE FOR ME?

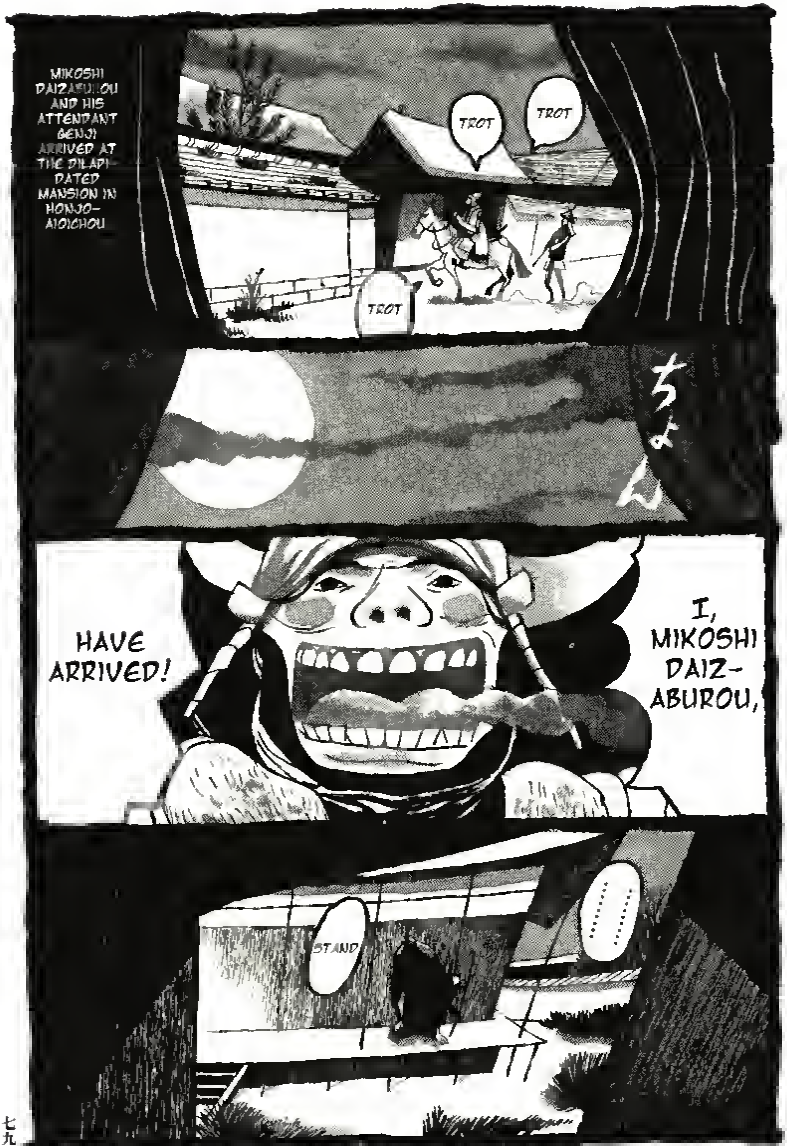
AHH... CAN'T STOP PEEING
じょおおお
AT THIS RATE, I WON'T BE DONE EVEN BY MORNING
HA.
BUYING WOMEN, PISSING ON WALLS,
MY, MY, AREN'T WE A DISGRACE TO SAMURAI EVERY-WHERE?
HM?
ううへ
おおお
ワッワ
用水

AHAHA!
HAH!
わ
は
は
は
は
は
は
HUH? WHAT WAS THAT YELLING JUST NOW?

OH JEEZE.
I THINK I DRANK WAY TOO MUCH
CRAP.
はは
わは.は
は
FOR SOME REASON, I FELT UNBEARABLY SAD.


MY TEARS WOULD NOT STOP FLOWING.
I LOVE FULL, ROUND MOONS.
LOOK HOW ROUND THE MOON IS, MESHI

I LIKE IT BECAUSE OF HOW IT REMINDS ME OF ROUND RICEBALLS.
ぐるぐる


MIKOSHI DAIZABUROU AND HIS ATTENDANT GENJI ARRIVED AT THE DILAPIDATED MANSION IN HONJO-AIOICHOU.
TROT
TROT
TROT
ちょん
I, MIKOSHI DAIZ-ABUROU,
HAVE ARRIVED!
STAND

CHAPTER 55
THE AUDIBLE HOOFSTEPS OF A THOUSAND HORSEMEN'S HORSES

はっ
MY SPEAR, GENJI.
AS FOR YOU, YOU CAN JUST HIDE BEHIND AND WATCH BY LEISURELY
I SHALL GO EXTER-MINATE THE DEMON
YES.

びゅうううう
ガッ
と…

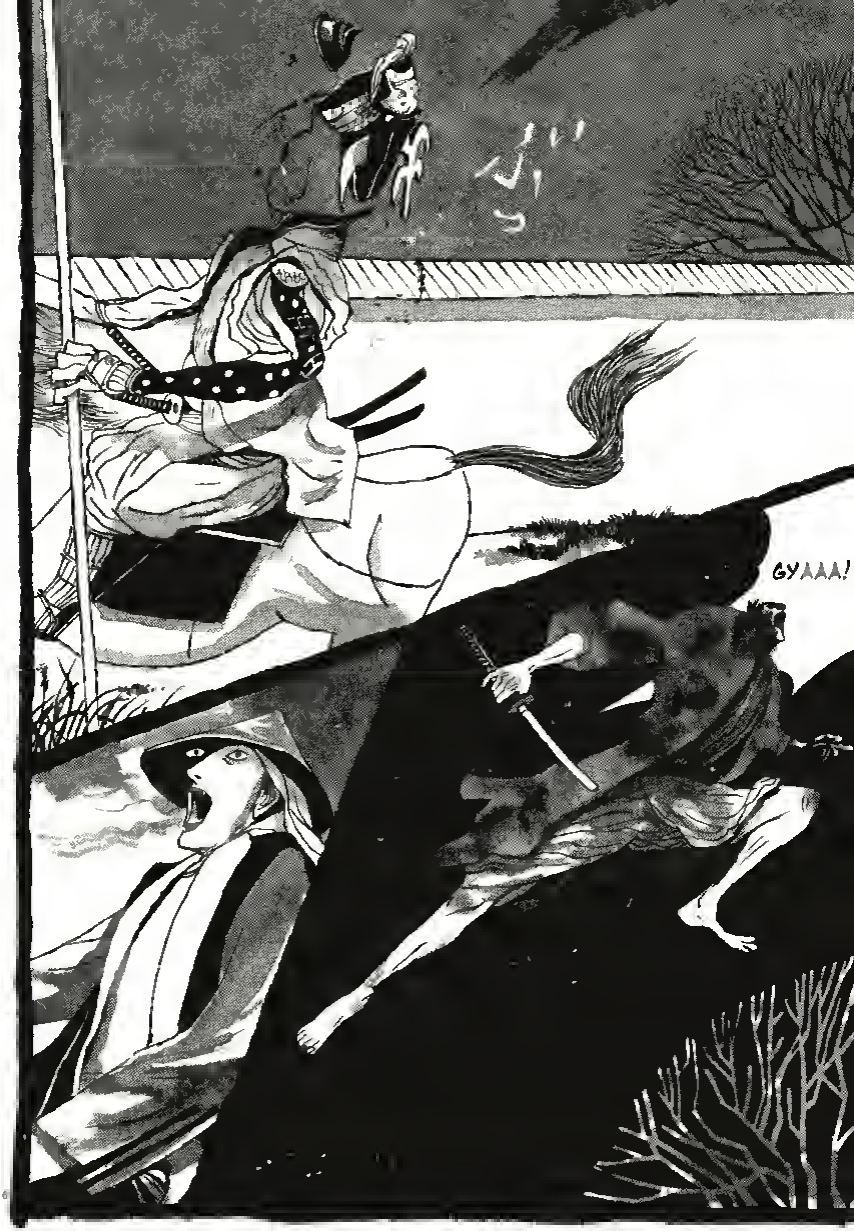
HAH!

ギッ
ずぉ・ず

TCH!
おおおお

LICK

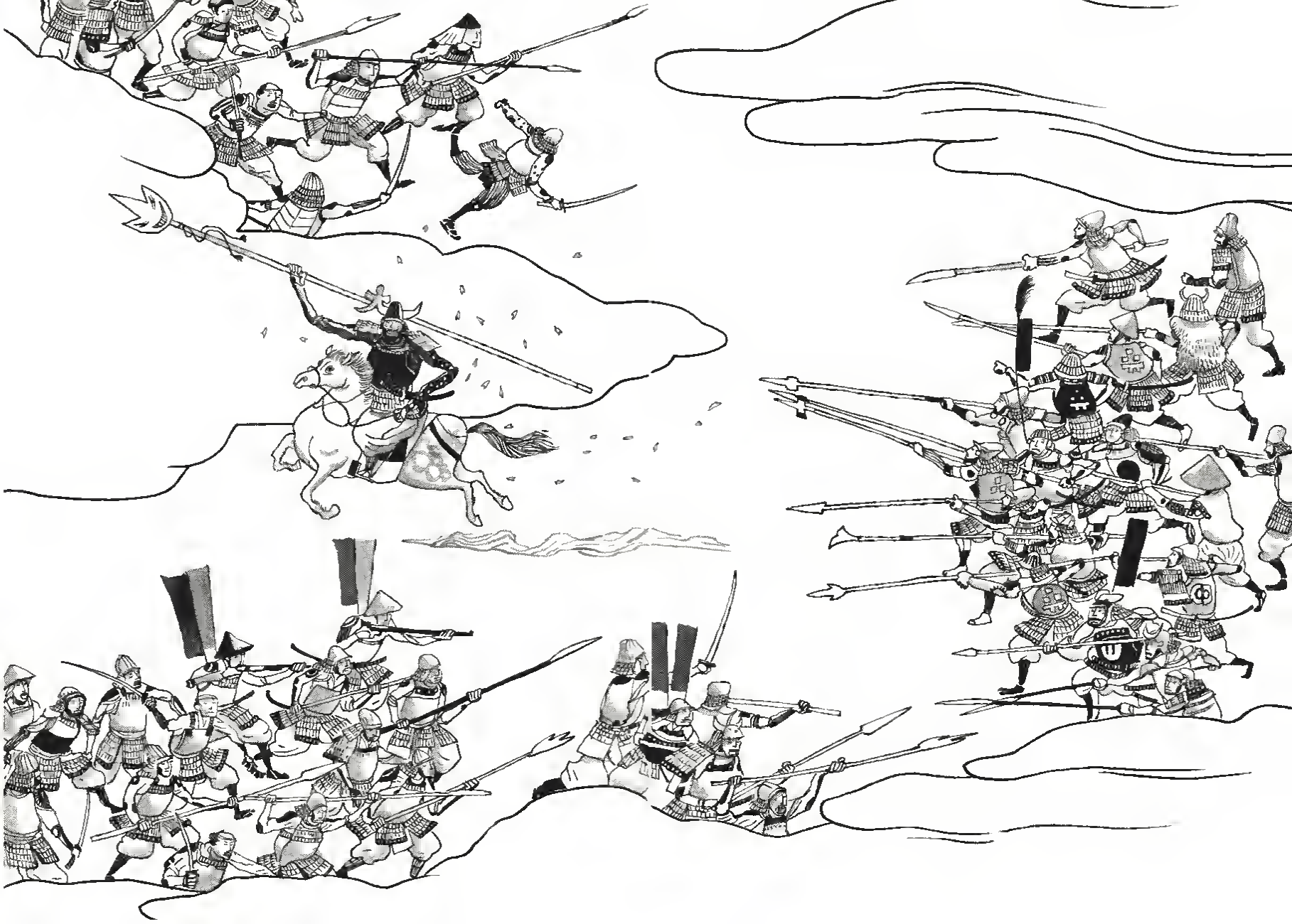
どっ
ぎゅっ


GYAAA!

AHH...
MY BODY AND HORSE IS...
AHAHA, GO ON THEN.

LONG LIVE, DAIZA-BUROU!
JAPAN'S GREATEST!
ずぶっ

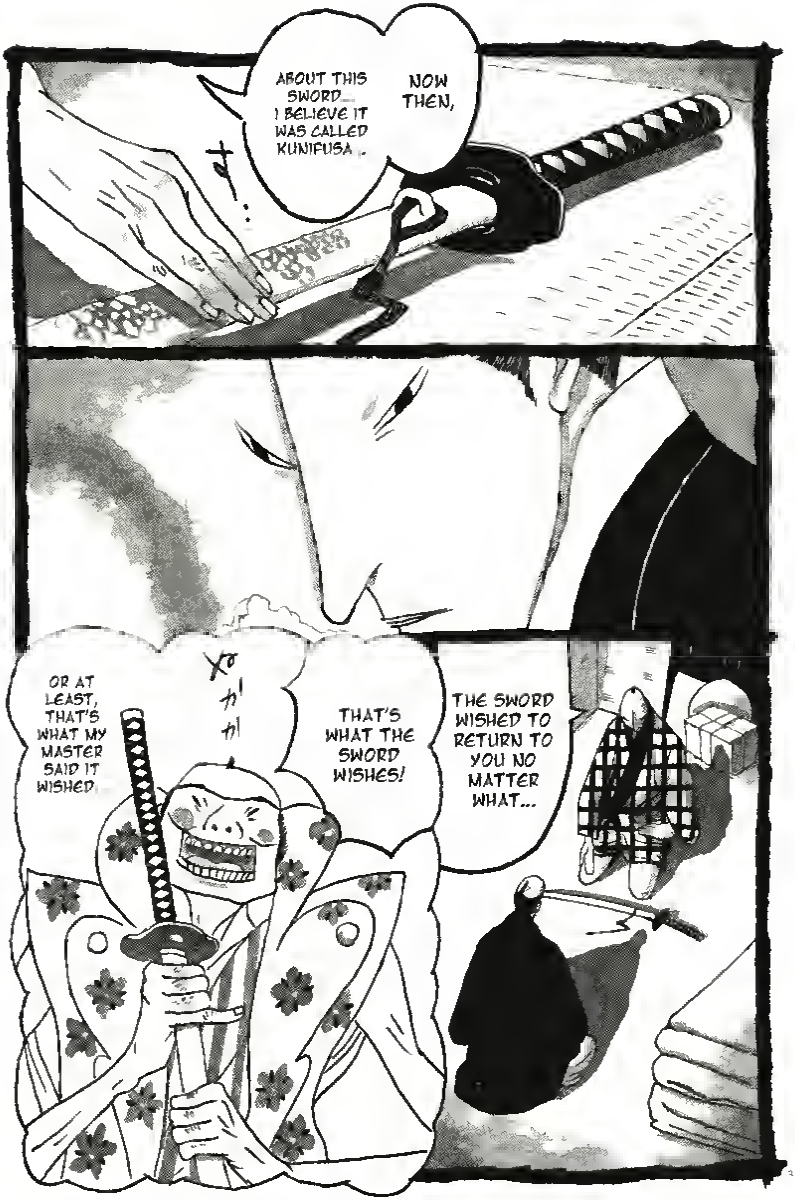
MY, WHAT A LONG LIFE I'VE LIVED.
WHEN I THINK BACK TO IT, IT ALL FEELS LIKE A DREAM.
MY TIME TO GO HAS COME.



HMPH...
AND THUS DID THE LIFE OF MIKOSHI DAIZASUROU COME TO AN END.

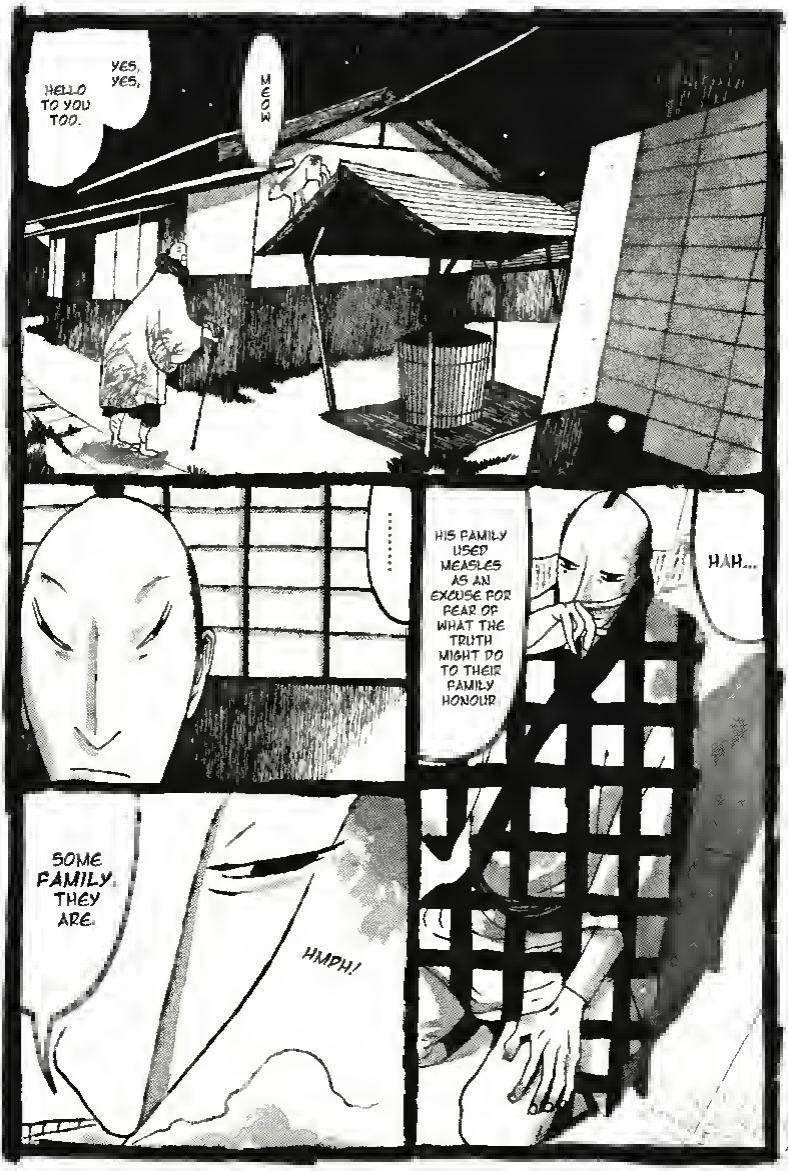
ALTHOUGH HIS BODY WAS ENORMOUS,
4AM, EDO, KATAGI TENEMENTS, SOUICHIROU'S HOUSE.
CHAPTER 56
BEFORE THE BREAK OF DAWN
【第五十六話】
夜明け前
I REALLY THOUGHT HE MIGHT BE A DEMON WEARING HUMAN SKIN AT THAT MOMENT.
HE MOVED AS SWIFT AS A BIRD

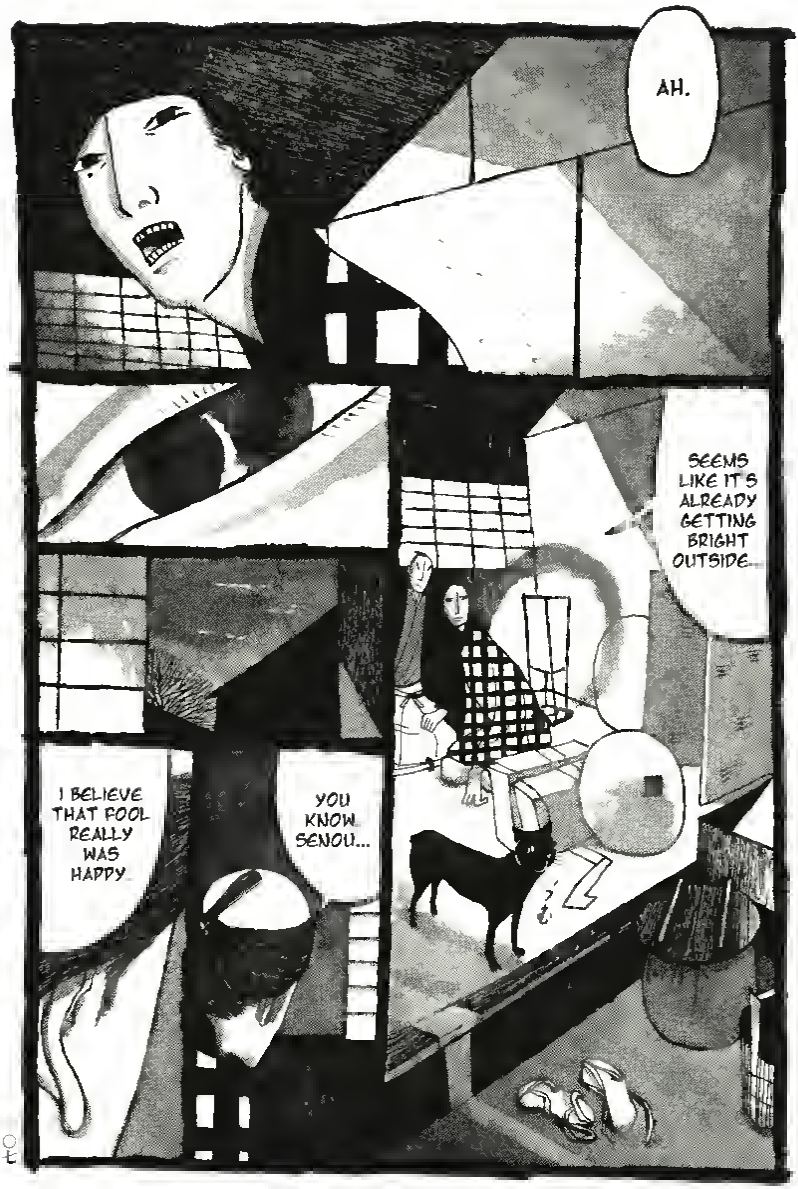
HAHA...
YET TO CHALLENGE SUCH A MAN... I DON'T KNOW IF THAT WAS MY MASTER BEING BRAVE OR IDIOTIC.
I'M TEMPTED TO SAY IT WAS THE LATTER.


NOW THEN,
ABOUT THIS SWORD... I BELIEVE IT WAS CALLED KUNIFUSA.
THE SWORD WISHED TO RETURN TO YOU NO MATTER WHAT...
THAT'S WHAT THE SWORD WISHES!
OR AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT MY MASTER SAID IT WISHED.

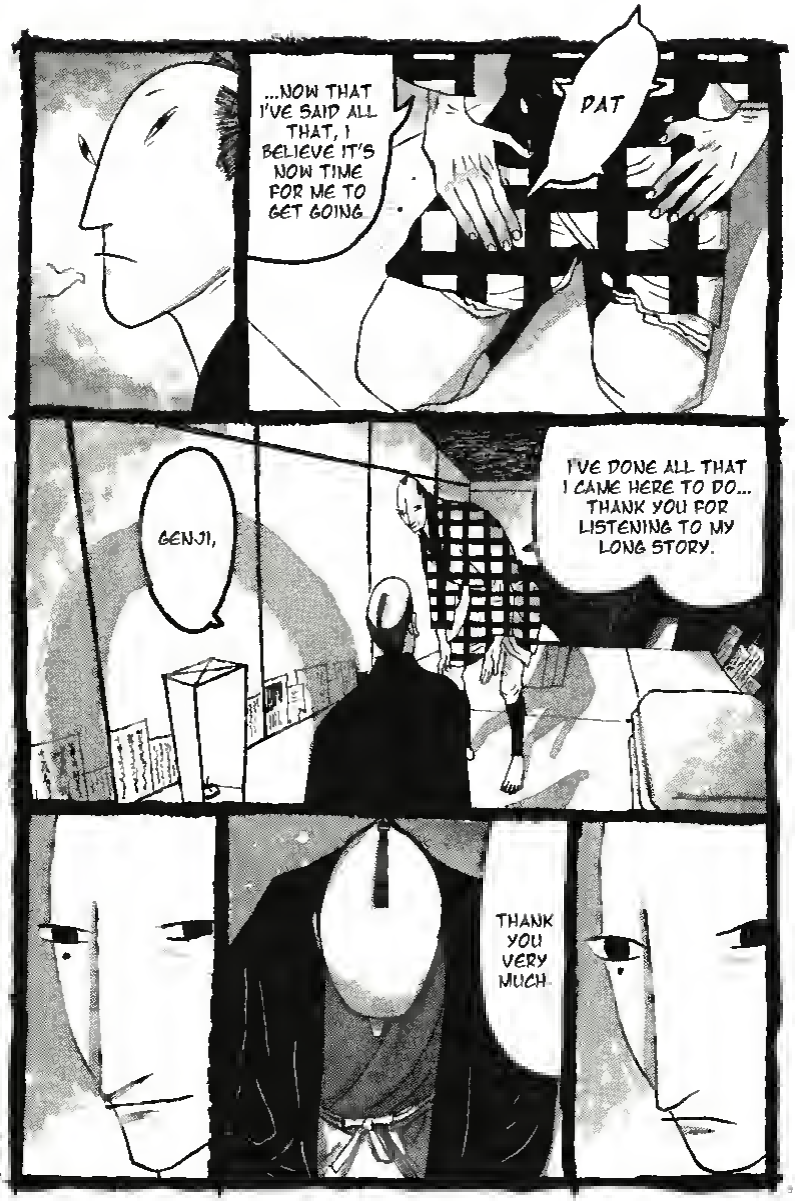
HE WAS ALWAYS QUITE THE THEATRICAL AND DRAMATIC MAN...
HM?
OTHER THAN THIS SWORD, ALL OF HIS POSSESSIONS HAVE ALREADY BEEN SOLD AWAY BY HIS FAMILY.
IT'S NOT SURPRISING, CONSIDERING HOW THEY ALWAYS HATED THEY HATED THE CRAB MASTER'S GAUDY POSSESSIONS.
A GUEST?
SLIDE
DO YOU HAVE A GUEST AT THIS LATE HOUR?

AH,
EXCUSE ME FOR THE VERY LATE VISIT.
OH, IT'S YOU, GENJI.
I HEARD ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO DAIZ ABUROU
MEASLES, WAS IT?
YES.
HE PASSED AWAY SOON AFTER CATCHING IT.
I WAS THINKING OF VISITING HIS HOME TO BURN UP INCENSE BUT I WORRIED MY SOCIAL STATUS MIGHT BE TOO LOW FOR THAT
. . . . .
NO, NO.
PLEASE DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT AND COME VISIT.
. . .


HELLO TO YOU TOO.
YES, YES,
MEOW
.....
HIS FAMILY USED MEASLES AS AN EXCUSE FOR FEAR OF WHAT THE TRUTH MIGHT DO TO THEIR FAMILY HONOUR.
HAH...
SOME FAMILY. THEY ARE.
HMPH!


AH.
SEEMS LIKE IT'S ALREADY GETTING BRIGHT OUTSIDE...
YOU KNOW SENOU...
I BELIEVE THAT FOOL REALLY WAS HAPPY

LIVING LIFE HALF-AWAKE, AND HALF IN A DREAM, HE ENJOYED HIMSELF TO HIS HEART'S CONTENT.
I WAS EVER SO LUCKY TO BE ABLE TO SPEND ALL THAT TIME WITH HIM.


...NOW THAT I'VE SAID ALL THAT, I BELIEVE IT'S NOW TIME FOR ME TO GET GOING.
PAT
I'VE DONE ALL THAT I CAME HERE TO DO... THANK YOU FOR LISTENING TO MY LONG STORY.
GENJI,
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

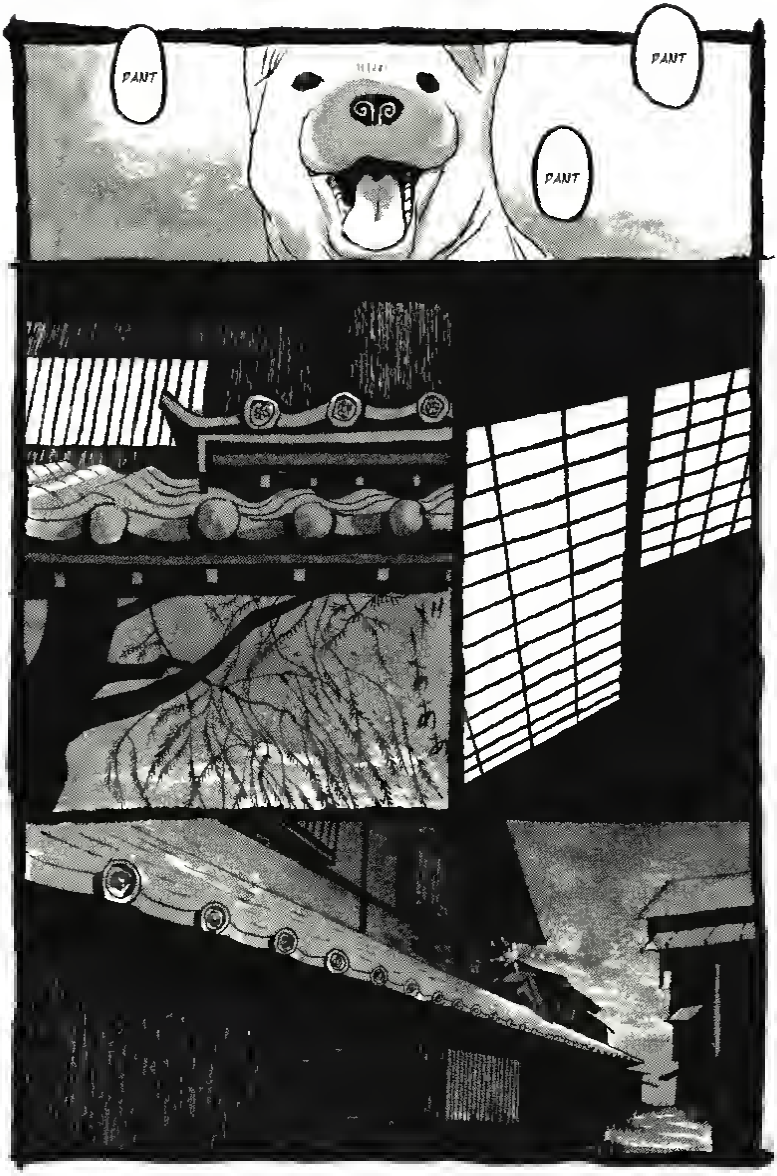
YES.
PLEASE TAKE CARE THEN...

AND THUS GENJI LEFT EDO.
キーん
きゃん
きゃん
THERE ARE RUMOURS THAT HE BECAME A PEDDLER BACK IN HIS HOMETOWN OR AN ACTOR IN KYOTO BUT...
GO AWAY!
POOP
POOP
POOP
THIS WILL BE THE LAST TIME WE HEAR FROM HIM IN THE STORY.
GO HOME!

FLICKER
.....
.....

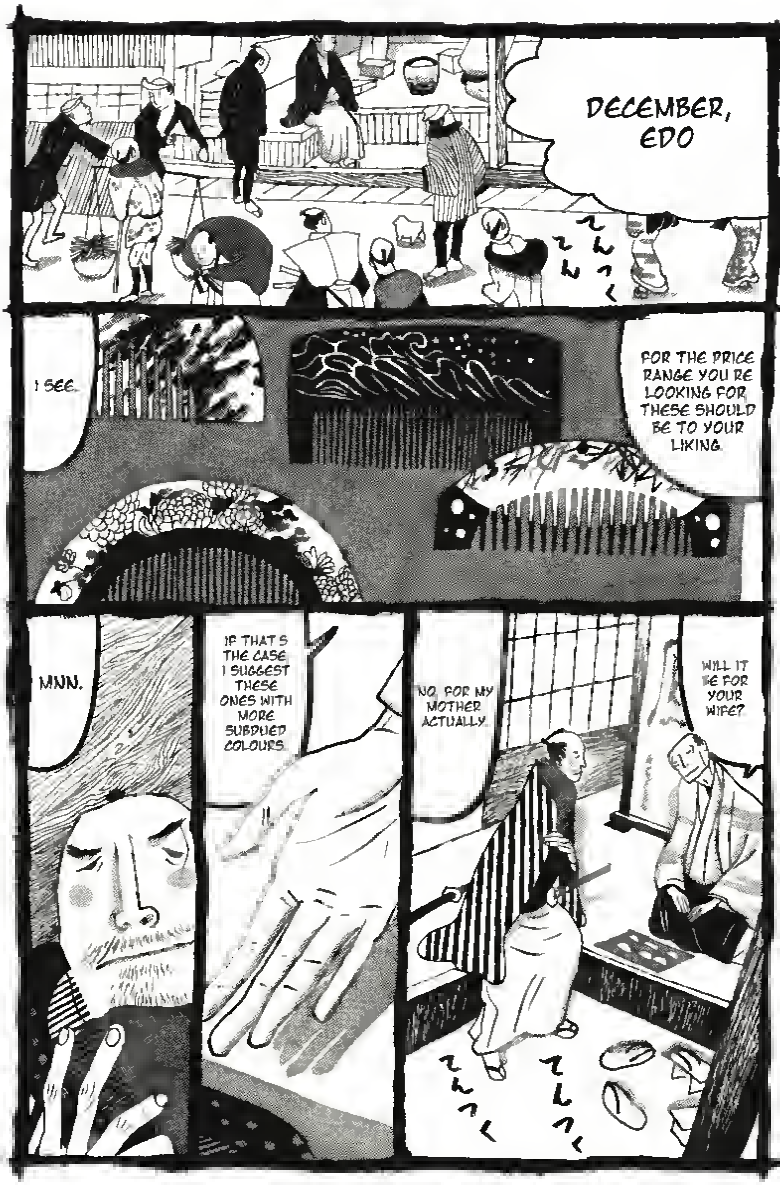
にゃ
ちゅ
ちゅ
ちゅ
ちゅ
……

SWEEP


PANT
PANT
PANT

ぎゅ
sss...

CHAPTER 57
COMB AND SWORD


DECEMBER, EDO
I SEE.
FOR THE PRICE RANGE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, THESE SHOULD BE TO YOUR LIKING.
MMM.
IF THAT'S THE CASE, I SUGGEST THESE ONES WITH MORE SUBDUED COLOURS.
NO, FOR MY MOTHER ACTUALLY.
WILL IT BE FOR YOUR WIFE?

SHE'S A VERY LUCKY MOTHER TO HAVE SUCH A CARING SON AS YOURSELF.
SHE'S SICK BACK AT HOME SO I THOUGHT A GIFT MIGHT CHEER HER UP...
MNN...

THANK YOU.
TAKE CARE, SIR
てんてん
てんてん
てんてん
てんてん
HEH HEH...
HM?

どん
OOF!
HEY, YOU!
HEY! WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING!
どんっ
!?

しゃ
しゃ
しゃ
しゃ
ちゃあ
まあ
しゃ
つくつくつくつくつくつくつくつく

てんっ
てんっ
てんっ
てんっ
てんっ

YOU'RE TELLING ME TO RETURN HOME WITH MY TAIL BETWEEN MY LEGS?
ZOKU- ZOKU-ZOKU
NO, I MERELY SAID IT WOULD BE BEST IF SIR DELIVERED THE COMB WADA BOUGHT FOR HIS MOTHER.
AHEM-O
AND GIVE HER OUR SINCEREST CONDO-LENCES.
PLEASE, WE BEG OF YOU.
すっ

2ND FLOOR OF THE APOTHECARY SHOP
JUST A TACTFUL EXCUSE TO SEND ME BACK...
.....
DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN TAKE HIM DOWN BY YOURSELVES?
IF I'M HERE, THEN...
WE'VE DECIDED TO GIVE UP ON KIKUCHI
YAMAMOTO...
WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT, THE REST OF US WILL ALL ASK PERMISSION TO RETURN HOME AS WELL

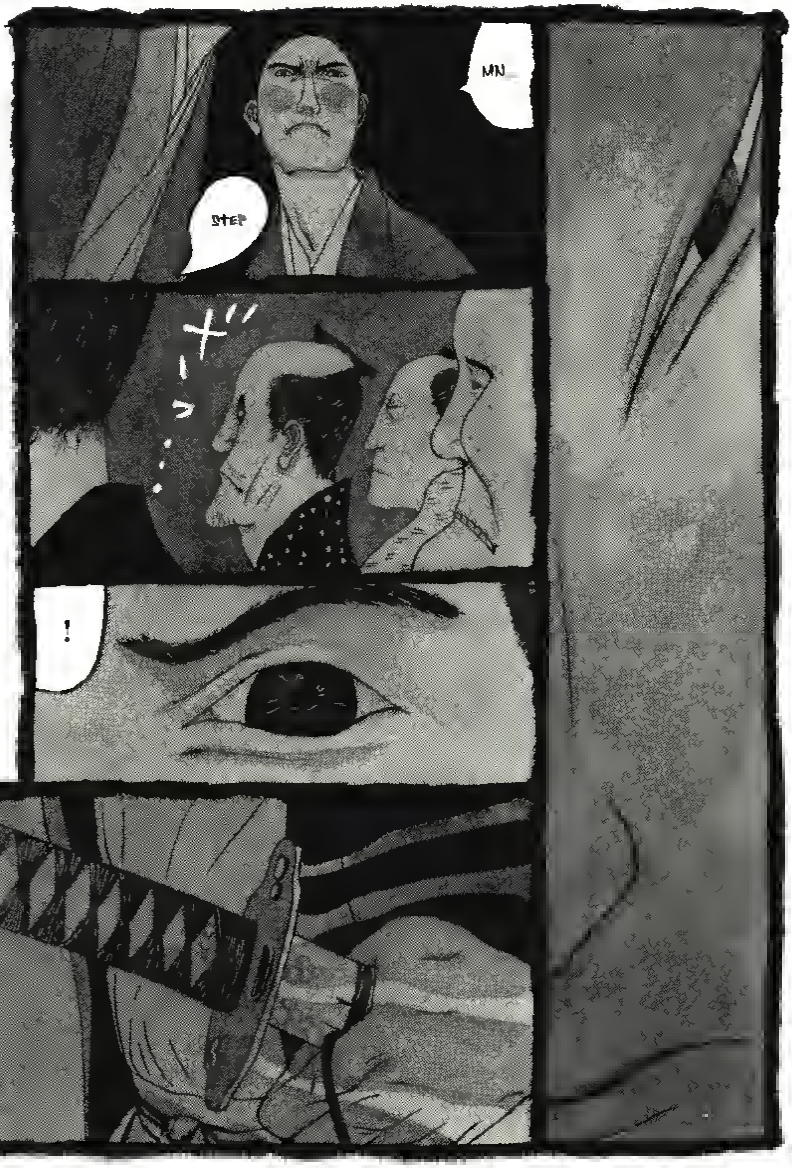
ザー
THIS IS WHY I TOLD YOU HE'S STILL CALLOW...
THEN I SHALL STAY HERE AND HUNT HIM DOWN MYSELF!
FINE!
.....
IN RETURN, I ONLY ASK THAT YOU AT LEAST TRY TO THINK ABOUT THOSE WHO HAVE TO SHOULDER THE RESPONS-IBILITY OF YOUR ACTIONS!
KAME!
I SAID, BY ALL MEANS, PLEASE GO FULFILL YOUR LONG CHERISHED DREAM OF BEING THE HEROIC WARRIOR!
WHAT WAS THAT!?

EVEN IN THE BEST CASE SCENARIO, WE'D END UP WITH A PAY CUT, THAT'S FOR SURE!
DO YOU KNOW WHAT WOULD BECOME OF US IF YOU LOST YOUR HEAD!?
IS THAT SO WRONG!?
THAT'S RIGHT! I AM SCARED!
THAT'S ENOUGH!
WHAT ABOUT OUR DUTY TO THOSE WHO'VE FALLEN!?
SO YOU'RE SCARED, KAMEI!? IS THAT IT!?
WHY SHOULD WE OF NO REAL IMPORTANT RANK NOR HIGH SALARIES GIVE A DAMN ABOUT WHO THE NEXT SUCCESSOR IS!?
TO PUT IT BLUNTLY WE DON'T WANT TO INVOLVE OURSELVES IN THIS MESS ANY MORE!
STEP

WHAT I'M ASKING YOU IS IF YOU'RE A WARRI-OR OR NOT!
DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT, KAMEI!
HAD TO GO WITHOUT A SINGLE DRINK JUST TO SAVE UP ENOUGH MONEY FOR THIS CHEAP COMB!?
DO YOU REALIZE HOW MANY DAYS POOR WADA WHO LOVED DRINKING MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE,
EXCUSE ME BUT...
!

MY APOLOGIES, SHOPKEEP WE'LL TRY TO KEEP OUR VOICES DOWN
AH, NO
THERE'S ACTUALLY A MAN WHO WISHES TO SEE YOU...
!!
LET HIM IN.
YES, SIR.
MY, MY...
あっ

QUITE A LARGE CROWD WE HAVE FOR SUCH A SMALL SPACE.


MN...
STEP
!

OPEN
IT WOULD BE ONLY TOO EASY TO KEEP AN EYE ON ME FROM HERE

AH, IF IT ISN'T KAN AND HIS FRIENDS.
WHAT DID YOU COME HERE FOR, SENOU!?
HIS STUDIES FOR THE DAY MUST BE OVER...
DID YOU COME HERE JUST TO TRIPLE WITH US!?

I'VE COME TO CUT DOWN KIKUCHI.
I SHALL KILL THAT MAN MYSELF.
EDO,
DECEMBER.

CHAPTER 58
KOI CARD UNDER THE SNOW

TAKEISHI FIEF OF SHINANO PROVINCE, CASTLE COURTYARD OF THE TAKI HOUSE
IT SEEMS ANOTHER ONE OF OUR MEN STATIONED AT EDO HAS BEEN KILLED, HYOUBUNOSUKE
AGAIN...
COUNTING HIM, THERE ARE NOW 4 DEAD...
COUGH
COUGH
LORD TAKI IZUMONOKAMI

I HEARD THE REASON FOR THEIR DEATHS HAD TO DO WITH THE SUCCESSION MATTER BUT IS THAT TRUE?
NO, THE REASON IS SOME MINOR AND TRIVIAL ONE, MY LORD
HEAD KAROU TAKEBE HYOUBUNO-SUKE
I SEE...
IN ANY CASE, I SINCERELY HOPE THAT WE DO NOT LOSE ANY MORE OF OUR YOUNG MEN AT EDO

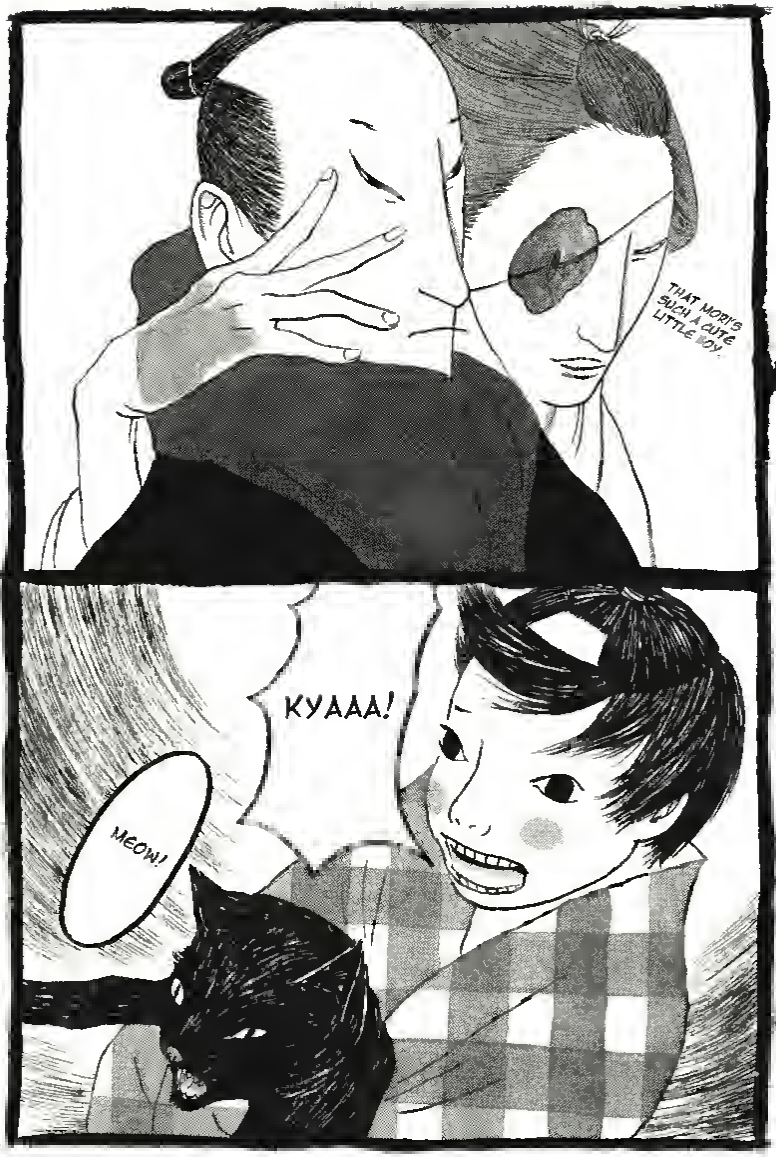
SECOND-IN-LINE KAROU OMURASAKI JUUZOU
YES...
JUUZOU, ISN'T THERE A WELL-KNOWN SENRYU* THAT GOES, "THE ONLY ONE IN THE DARK IS THE HUSBAND"...?
THAT'S ENOUGH...
I'D RATHER NOT SEE THE KOI CARPS IF IT MEANS HAVING TO BREAK THROUGH ALL THIS THICK ICE
YES, SIR...

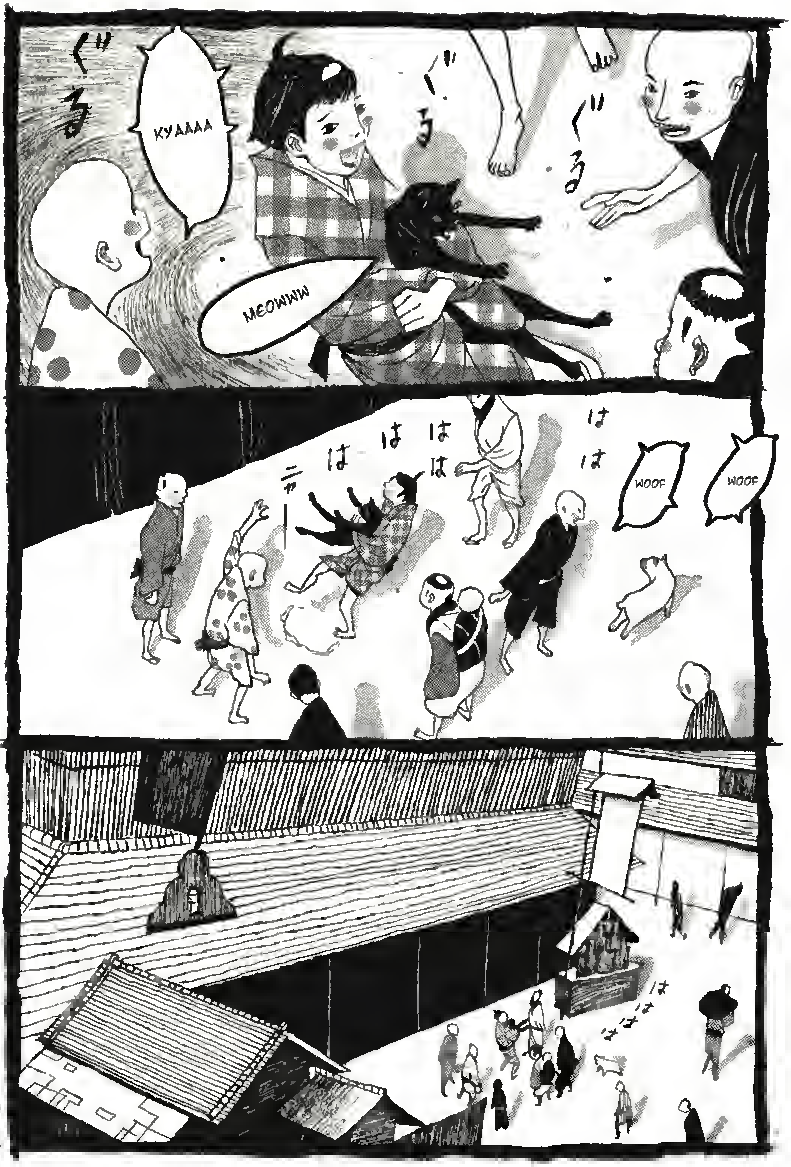
*TYPE OF JAPANESE POEM

WINTER'S END IS STILL FAR AWAY...
COUGH

EDO
MORI AND SENOU
HOW LONG DO YOU INTEND TO BE WITH US?
THE OTHERS ARE QUITE AGITATED BECAUSE OF YOU
UNTIL I CUT DOWN KIKUCHI.
WOULD YOU LIKE ONE?
.....
SOME OF THE MORE BAD-TEMPERED ONES SUCH AS KAMEI ARE SAYING THEY OUGHT TO KILL YOU INSTEAD!
AND DO YOU THINK I COULD REALLY BE KILLED BY THE LIKES OF THEM?

NO,
ざあああ……
I DO NOT.
STEP


THAT MORI'S SUCH A CUTE LITTLE BOY.
KYAAA!
MEOW!


くぅる
KYAAAA
MEOWWW
くぅる
くぅる
はは
はは
はは
ニャー
WOOF
WOOF
はは

HM...
BACK TO,
SHINANO AGAIN.
QUITE COLD, ISN'T IT, ROKUBEE.
YES, SIR...
YOUR KNEES MUST BE TIRED YES?
YES, VERY MUCH SO...

VERY SWEET.
THIS YEAR'S BATCH IS QUITE GOOD.
IT MUST BE BECAUSE OF ALL THE FROST WE HAD THIS FALL...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH, SIR.
IT'S DRIED PERSI-MMON
HERE,
OH.
GRANDCHILD, HUH...
...
AH, NO.
I WAS THINKING OF GIVING IT TO MY GRAND-CHILD...
HM? NOT GOING TO EAT?

OH, NO, SPRING WILL BE HERE SOON ENOUGH.
SEEMS LIKE THESE COLD DAYS WILL CONTINUE.
HEY, YOU. OVER THERE COME AND HELP BRING THE HORSE.
IT SHOULD BE RIGHT ABOUT WHEN THE WHEAT START SPROUTING.
HMM.
RIGHT OVER HERE...
CLOP CLOP

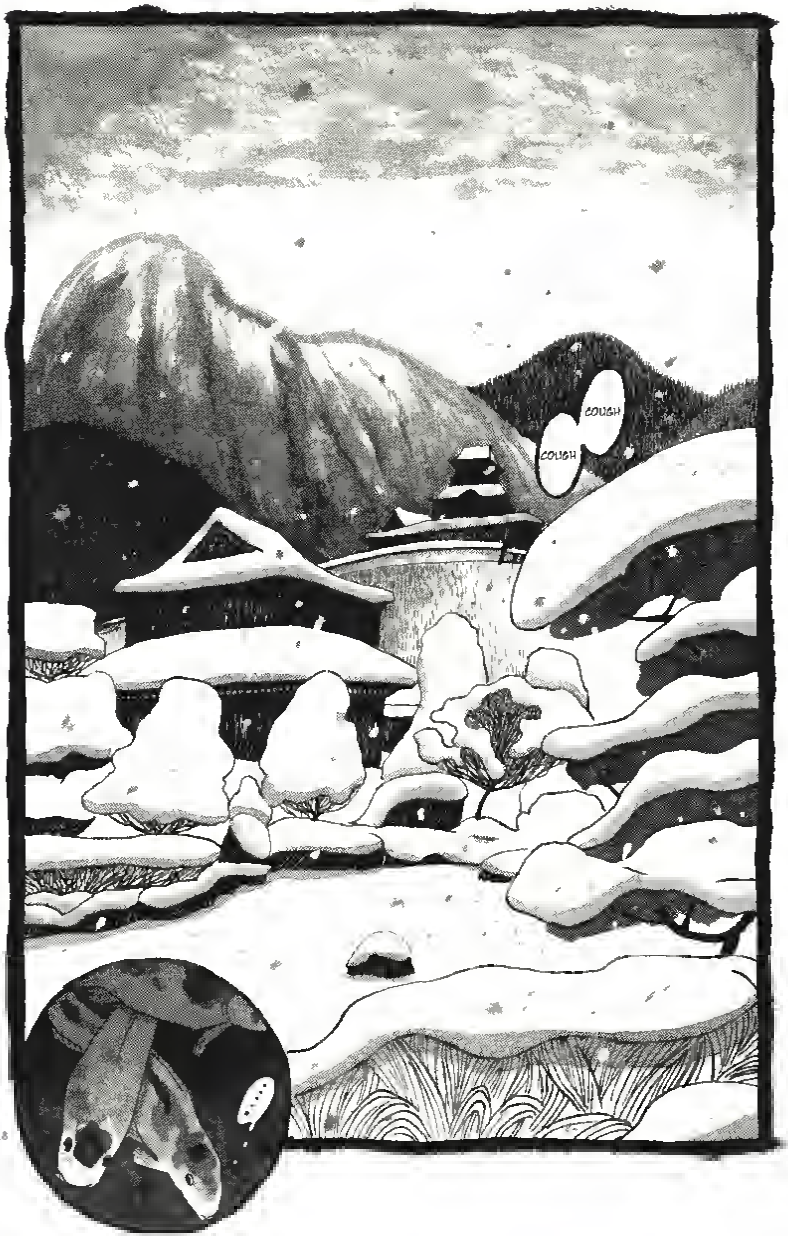
YOU OK?
UGH, DAMMIT... MY HEAD IS SPINNING.
?
MEOW
I'M GONNA THROW UP.
HEY.

HMM? WHERE'S MORI AND SENOU?
STEP
HOW WOULD I KNOW!?
MORI WENT BACK TO THE MANSION WHILE SENOU IS UP ON THE ROOF.
AGAIN?
HE'S A STRANGE ONE ALRIGHT
MAYBE WE OUGHTA AMBUSH HIM FROM BELOW HEH HEH
HA
QUIT IT.
HE REALLY DOES SEEM LIKE HE'S OFF IN HIS OWN WORLD, DOESN'T HE?
HMPH.

ISN'T IT COLD UP HERE SENOU?
A LITTLE, I SUPPOSE.
CAN YOU SEE SOMETHING FROM HERE?
I CAN SEE THE SKY.
AND YOU CAN SEE BIRDS AND CLOUDS DRIFTING BY.
WELL, PLEASE TAKE CARE AS TO NOT CATCH A COLD.
YAMAMOTO.

DO YOU THINK THIS VERY SKY STRETCHES OUT ALL THE WAY TO SHINANO...?
WHAT ARE YOU, AN IDIOT!?
WELL, OF COURSE. IT WOULD BE QUITE TROUBLING IF THE SKY WAS INTERRUPTED BY SOME GAPING HOLE
HAHA... IT FEELS AS IF I'M SOARING THROUGH THE SKIES AND RETURNING TO THE MOUNTAINS.
WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES AND THINK OF THE MOUNTAINS

THAT'S HOW I FEEL.

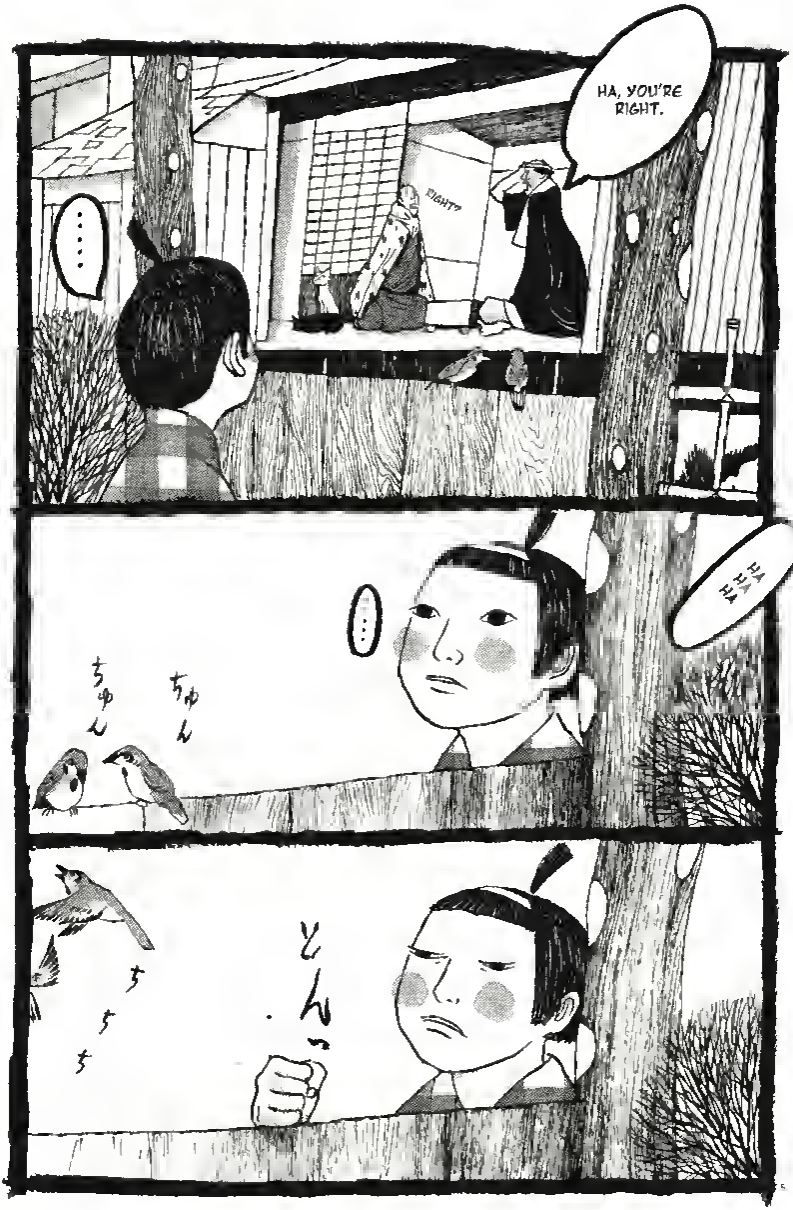

COUGH
COUGH

CHAPTER 59
STARLINGS

THE SKIES ARE BLOOD-RED...
YOU KNOW, THESE DAYS I THINK THAT I OUGHT TO LEAVE THIS BLOOD STENCHED TOWN.
WHILE MY LEGS ARE STILL GOOD ENOUGH TO STAND.
SO SENOU'S ASSOCIATING HIMSELF WITH OTHER SAMURAI?
MEOW
YES.
SANZOU JUST SAW HIM WITH THEM AROUND KOBIKICHOU.

IT SEEMS HE'S ALWAYS WITH A COUPLE TOUGH-LOOKING SAMURAI THESE DAYS...
OH, IS THAT SO?
I'VE HEARD FROM HOUGA THAT HE HADN'T SHOWN UP TO THE SCHOOL THESE DAYS
HMM
PERHAPS HE FOUND A JOB WITH THEM?
WELL... APPARENTLY FROM WHAT SANZOU SAID...
HM LET'S SEE

SENOU'S THE ONE LEADING THEM AROUND?
YES, THAT'S APPARENTLY HOW IT SEEMED
ALMOST AS IF HE WERE THEIR LORD...
SIDE
HMPH
AS IF SANZOU WOULD KNOW A LORD FROM A COMMONER.


HA, YOU'RE RIGHT.
RIGHT?
……
ちゅん
ちゅん
ふふふ
ち
ち
ち
とん

WITH A WAVE OF THE WAR FAN, THE MATCH BEGINS AND KASHIWADO IMMEDIATELY CHARGES WITH HIS HEAD.
茶飯
YET IS UNMOVING AS THE MOUNTAINS.
RAIDEN RECEIVES THE BLOW
IS THAT A NEW DANCE YOU'RE SHOWING US, KAMEI? HAHA
KASHIWADO ATTEMPTS A RIGHT HAND ATTACK BUT THAT, TOO IS DEFTLY STOPPED BY RAIDEN
SHAKE

RAIDEN THEN GRABS KASHIWADO'S ARM AND LIFTS HIM RIGHT UP IN THE AIR.
THE ENTIRE ARENA FALLS TO A DEAD SILENCE.
SEIZING THAT MOMENT, RAIDEN THEN...
THROWS KASHI-WADO OUT OF THE RING!
ぶはは
!!
DISGUSTING.

SEEMS LIKE WE'VE GOT A FLOCK OF ROWDY STARLINGS.*
HMPH
SOMETHING WRONG?
!
YOU LOT HAVE STUNK UP EDO QUITE A BIT WITH YOUR DROP-PINGS.

*PEJORATIVE TERM FOR COUNTRYFOLK WHO'VE COME TO EDO, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE FROM SHINANO.

STARLINGS ARE BETTER OFF CHIRPING QUIETLY IN SOME CORNER WHERE THEY'RE NEITHER SEEN NOR HEARD.
……
……
カハハハ
FINE.
GRAB

WHY DON'T WE TAKE THIS OUTSIDE,
SO WE DON'T DISTURB THE SHOP.
どっ
どっ
BLADE
!?

SO I BEG YOUR MERCY, SIR...
WE STARLINGS CANNOT HELP BUT BE EXCITED BY THE COMING SPRING.
MIGHT I INQUIRE WHERE YOU SIRS ARE FROM?
WE'VE COME FROM THE WEST...
HM, WHO'RE YOU?
EH?

HMPH, WARRIORS DO NOT PARTAKE IN CARELESS TALK.
WE'VE COME FROM TATEISHI OF SHINANO.
TAP
I CAN SEE THE OCEAN FROM YOUR FACES.
A MOST BRAVE, BLUE SOUTHERN OCEAN.
ONE THAT HAS DISCIPLINED YOU SIRS....

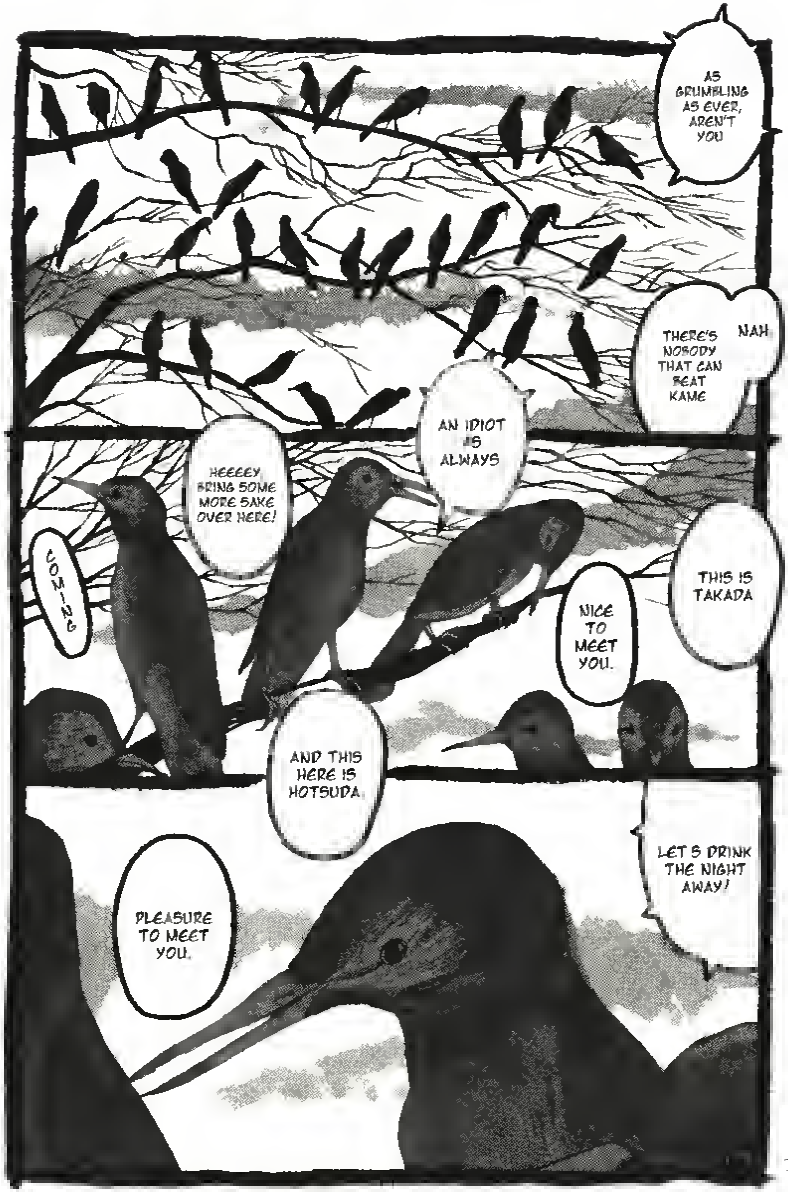
THE LANDS THAT WE HAIL FROM HAS NO PLACE FOR AN OCEAN, BUT IS SURROUNDED BY MOUNTAINS ON ALL SIDES
THE WINTER WINDS, SHARP ENOUGH TO CUT ONE'S BODY,
WHILE THE TOWERING HILLS AND THE BITING COLD REJECTS ANY HUMAN ENTRY
BUT ONCE SPRING COMES AROUND—

YES,
JUST LIKE THIS.

JUST LISTEN TO THE CRIES OF THE BIRD AND YOU'LL UNDER-STAND
?
ARE THEY CHIRPING TO THREATEN OTHERS OR BEFRIEND THEM...?
はっ

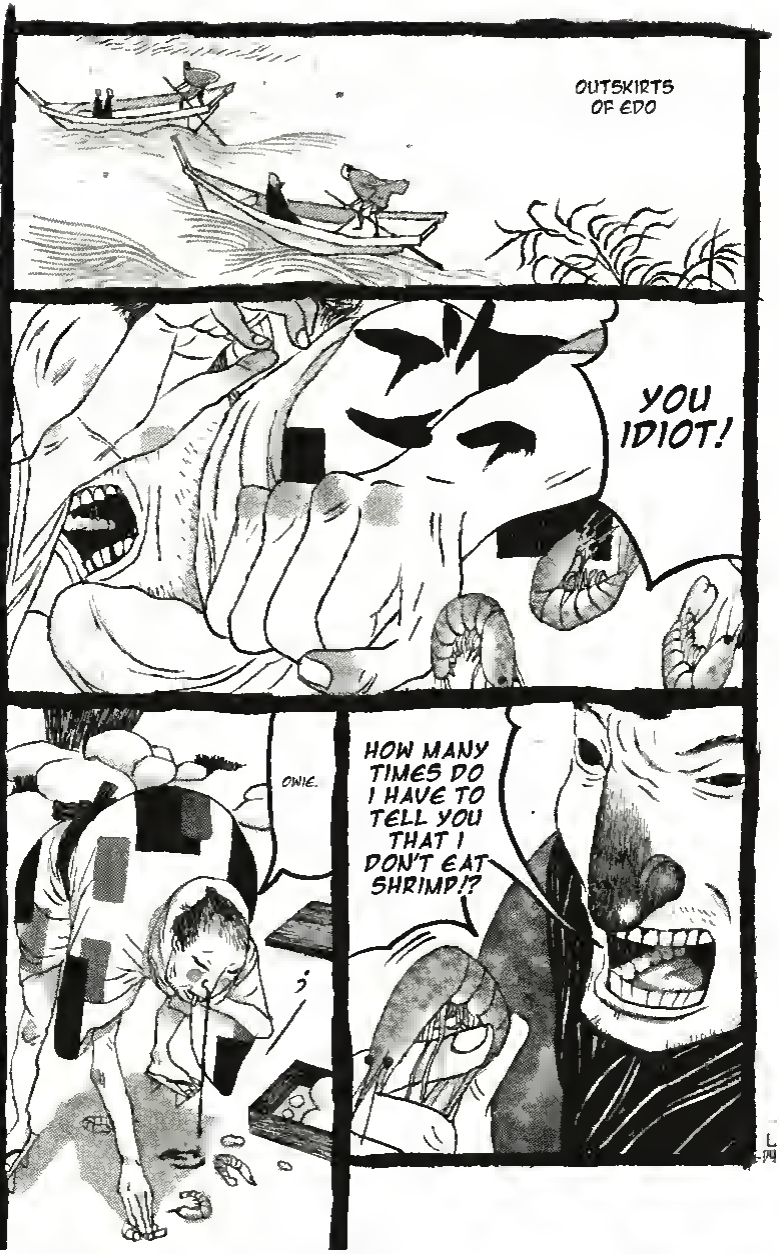
HA HA HA HA
HMPH.
WHAT'S THE USE IN WAGGING HIS TAIL AT THOSE WEAKLINGS...
WHOO
HAHA
.....
WHAT?
NO, NOTHING ...

HAHAHA
ENOUGH WITH THE STUPID INTRODUC-TIONS!
THIS HERE IS OOKURO. HE HAS NO REAL TALENT OTHER THAN EATING
HA
HA
HA


AS GRUMBLING AS EVER, AREN'T YOU
NAH
THERE'S NOBODY THAT CAN BEAT KAME
AN IDIOT IS ALWAYS
HEEEEY, BRING SOME MORE SAKE OVER HERE!
COMING
THIS IS TAKADA
NICE TO MEET YOU.
AND THIS HERE IS HOTSUDA.
LET'S DRINK THE NIGHT AWAY!
PLEASURE TO MEET YOU.

CHAPTER 60

SNOW IN EDO


OUTSKIRTS OF EDO
YOU IDIOT!
OWIE.
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT I DON'T EAT SHRIMP!?

I'LL JUST EAT SOME-THING ELSE!
ENOUGH!
FINE, AYE'LL GO TO TOWN AGAIN.
WHAT?
HEY, BOSS.
TCH
WHYYYYYY NOOOOT! MEANIE!
NO, SINCE YOU BROUGHT ME SHRIMP.
GEHEH
SHOW ME DEM BICEPS AGAIN, WILL YA?

NGH
UHO!
AH-MAZING! BOSS'S BICEPS ARE SO GREAT!
SO HUGE LIKE MOUNTAINS

HMPH
AHHH
I'M HAPPIEST WHEN I SEE BRO'S BICEPS.
THEN IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...

AH, SENOU GOING HOME?
YES.
THOUGH IT IS NEW YEAR'S EVE I ADVISE YOU ALL TO BE ON GUARD AT ALL TIMES.
KIKUCHI WILL CERTAINLY BE WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO STRIKE.
YES.
YOU TOO.

DO YOU THINK WE OUGHT TO TELL SENOU... ABOUT HIS ACTUAL LINEAGE...?
.....
I FEEL RATHER BAD THAT THE TRUTH HAS BEEN HIDDEN FROM HIM.
HM
NO,
THAT IS NOT OUR DUTY.

OH, IT'S SNOWING, SISTER.
WOOF
WOOF
WOOF
I THOUGHT THAT IT MIGHT NOT SNOW ANYMORE FOR THIS YEAR BUT...
HAHA LOOK AT RIKI FROLICKING ABOUT LIKE A POOL
キャん
キャん
AH!
NO!
AGHH!

HAHA

I GUESS WE BETTER CLOSE UP SHOP FOR THE DAY.
HA HA HA
TAKE THIS!
STOP
KYAHAHA! YOUR NOSE IS RUNNING, SISTER!
キャはは
ハア…

GREAT WORK, RED EYES!
GU HE HE HE
NOW LET'S GRILL IT AND EAT!

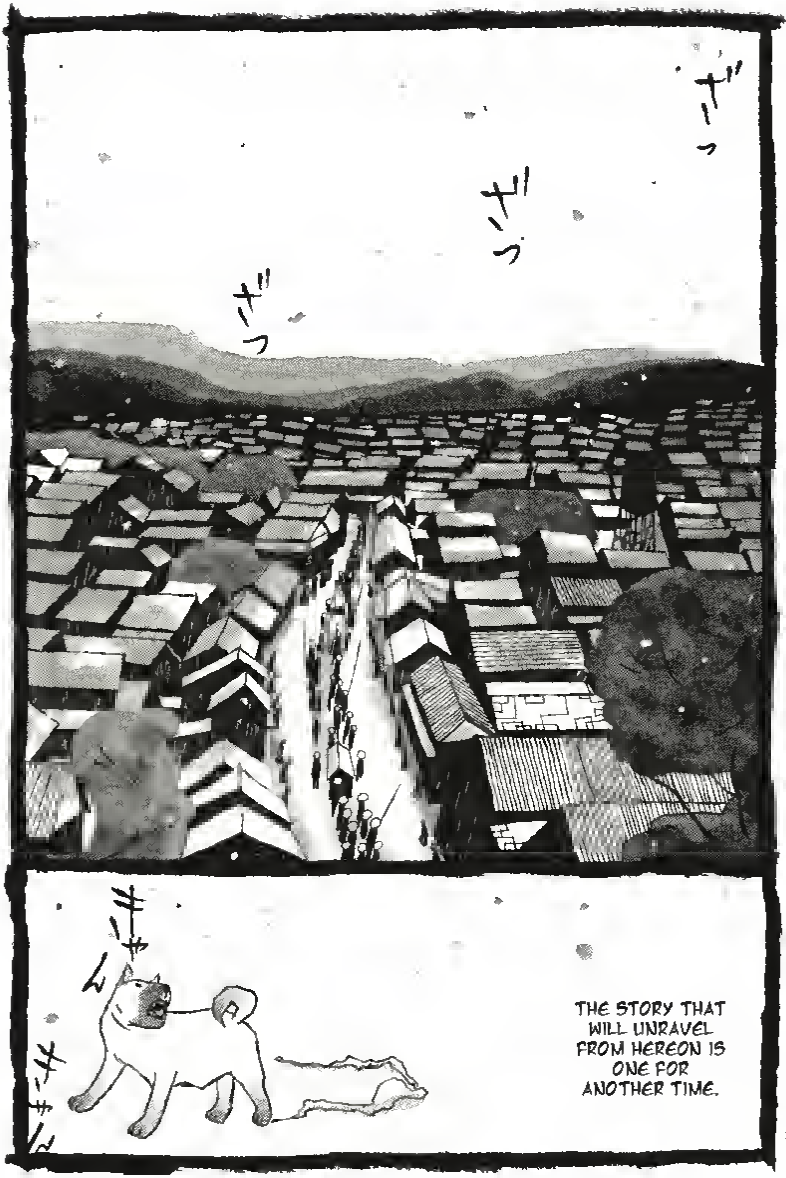
STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP

WHICH DAIMYO DO YOU THINK IS VISITING THIS TIME?
THE ONLY ONES WHO'D VISIT EDO AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR ARE THOSE CLOSE BY
IT MUST BE THE DAIMYO FROM EITHER SAKURA OR SEKIYADO
OW OW OW
SAKURA—?
TEACHER, IS THAT BASKET OVER THERE WHAT THE DAIMYO'S RIDING?
AT THIS TIME...

KAN DECIDED TO STOP THINKING...
COME THEN, KAN.
IT'S GETTING COLD OUT HERE
LET'S GO INSIDE.
ABOUT ASKING WHETHER SENOU WOULD CONTINUE TO STAY WITH HIM FOREVER OR NOT
WHY DON'T WE GIVE THE CHILDREN SOME MANJUU.

SOU'S HAND THAT KAN HADN'T HELD IN A LONG TIME FELT AS HARD AS A ROCK.

SO COLD, SO COLD



TRANSLATED BY HOX

第七集へつづく……

待つべし、待つべし。

肩に友なる白鼠。
筋、たくましく、身の丈六尺。

出自いやしき身なれば
〝人斬り〟にて世を渡る
そびえ立つ悪形、

木久地真之介。

その剣が欲してやまぬのは
〝おれとおんなじ
人の皮をかぶった化けもの〟

瀬能宗一郎。

血で血を洗い、骨で骨を断つ

対決、近し。

竹光侍

His sword must be bamboo!

松本大洋＋永福一成

次集、第七集、血と肉片の絵巻物也!!

［週刊ビッグコミックスピリッツ］にて鮮烈連載中!!

小学館 インターネットでビッグコミックスが購入できます。http://comics.shogakukan.co.jp

松本大洋の本

絶賛発売中!!

大切なのは感じること!!
夏と野球の世界に生きる花男と茂雄!!
松本大洋父子伝説!!!!

花男

◉新装版◉全3巻

誰か俺をこの檻から出してくれ!!
どこにも届かぬ魂の叫びの短編集!!
松本大洋不良伝説!!!!

青い春

◉新装版◉全1巻

イラスト&短編集!!
最も進化したコミック!!!!

100

◉オールカラー

[100]に続く
イラスト&短編集第2弾!!!!

101

◉オールカラー